

Security forces kill 4 militants in Egypt

CAIRO (AP) — Security forces killed four militants in the southern province of Minya in a two-hour gun battle, Interior Minister Hassan Alfi said Tuesday. The clash occurred Monday night in Samalut, 200 kilometres southwest of Cairo, he said. The four killed were "dangerous terrorists" who were involved in the killing of nine Christians during an attack on a nearby Coptic Church in February, General Alfi said. He added police confiscated documents listing names of several people the militants planned to kill. He did not elaborate. The government uses the term "dangerous terrorists" to refer to members of Al Gamaa Al Islamiya, or the Islamic group, an umbrella organisation for groups fighting to oust Egypt's secular government and set up an Islamic state. More than 1,050 people have since been killed in the violence.

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Saudi crown prince visits Egypt

RIYADH (AFP) — Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah Ben Abdul Aziz was to visit Egypt Tuesday for talks with President Hosni Mubarak on the deadlocked Middle East peace process, an Egyptian diplomatic source said. He said the visit to Cairo would last two days, with talks on bilateral cooperation and the situation in the Arab World also on the agenda. King Fahd Monday appealed to the international community to intervene to rescue the peace process, which has been stalled since Israel started building a new Jewish settlement in Arah east Jerusalem in March. "The international community and all countries who want peace are called upon to make sincere efforts to save the peace process which is going through a deplorable time because of Israel's intransigence," the King said.

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King, Saudi foreign minister discuss peace process developments, bilateral relations Prince Saud hints Saudi Arabia may boycott MENA

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Saudi Arabian foreign minister, Prince Saud Al Faisal, Tuesday blamed Israel for the current deadlock in the peace process and hinted at the possibility that his country might boycott the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Economic Summit that is scheduled to convene in Doha in November.

"The Arab countries have extended all efforts to push the peace process ahead and to bring a new reality to the region... the peace process is frozen because of Israeli stands," Prince Saud said at Marka airport before heading for the Royal Court to meet His Majesty King Hussein.

"The economic summit (talks) is aimed at supporting peace and creating the required atmosphere to push the process ahead," he said. But "Israel has demolished all justifications for optimism in this summit as it demolished at the same time all pretexts for the multilateral negotiations," Prince Saud said.

Prince Saud, who attended the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) summit in Riyadh earlier this week, added that "things will remain stagnant... and Arabs bear no responsibility for this stagnation."

Last month, Syria started a campaign against the MENA summit and called

on all Arab countries to boycott it.

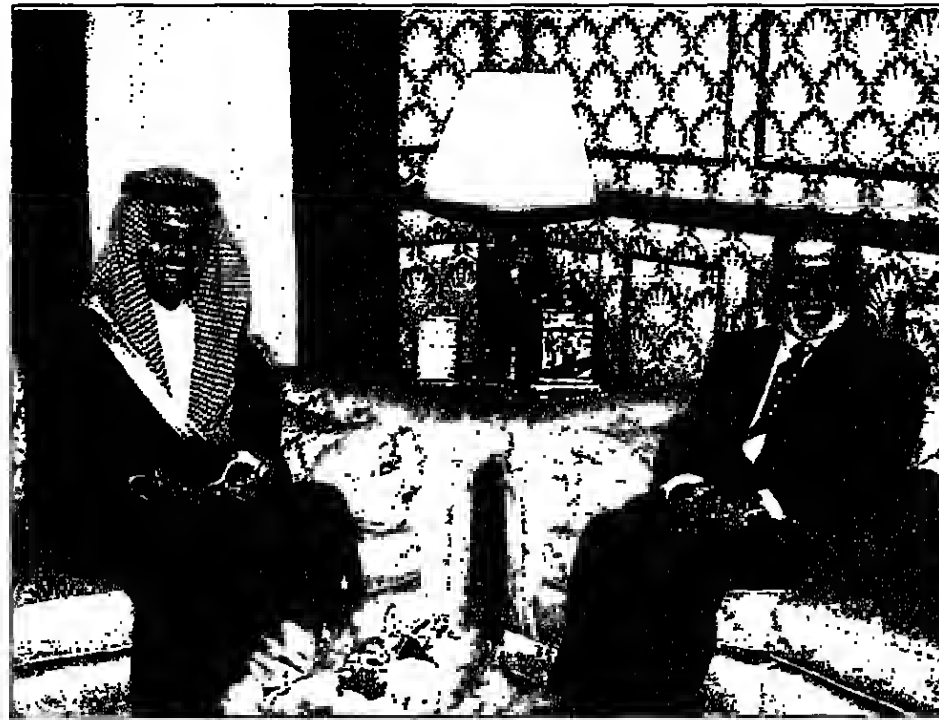
Qatar repeatedly said that it will go ahead and hold the summit despite calls by Syria and the Arab League to stop all trade and economic ties with Israel.

The Doha summit is the fourth since the historic Madrid peace conference which launched peace negotiations. Israel attended all three previous conferences, which were held in Casablanca, Amman and Cairo, respectively. Syria boycotted all these meetings.

On Monday, Syrian Vice President Abdul Halim Khaddam said that Israel's stance on Middle East peace makes the regional economic summit useless and that it would be better for Arabs to hold their own economic meeting.

"The economic summit was set up for the sake of Israel and to establish Israel as a member and partner in the region. Therefore, holding the summit without Israel will stand in the way of achieving the ends of those who worked for such summits," Mr. Khaddam said.

"If we want to hold such summits, why not hold an Arab economic summit... why do we concentrate on such summits in the light of current Israeli policy, which obstructs the peace process and cancels the points of reference of peace in the region. It is not useful," Mr. Khaddam said



His Majesty King Hussein and Saudi Arabian Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Faisal during their meeting Tuesday evening. The Saudi prince is visiting Jordan accompanied by officials to discuss bilateral relations and peace process crisis (Photo by Youssef Allan)

following his meeting with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Cairo on Monday.

Jordan News Agency, Petra, said that His Majesty held a closed door meeting with the Saudi prince at the Royal Court that was followed by an expanded meeting attended by officials from the two sides.

The agency said that talks focused on recent developments in the peace process and added that the two sides stressed on the need to unify

efforts to push the peace process ahead to overcome the deadlock and to reach a comprehensive and just peace in the region.

The two sides also discussed ways to develop bilateral relations, Petra added.

Earlier, Prince Saud said that he will deliver a message from King Fahd Ben Abdul Aziz to His Majesty King Hussein adding that he will hold talks with Foreign Minister Fayez Tarawneh on bilateral relations.

News reports in Jordan indicated that among the issues to be discussed a Jordanian request to supply Jordan with Saudi oil. Currently, Jordan receives more than 90,000-barrel of oil from Iraq at a concessional rate.

Saudi Arabia is the Kingdom's second largest Arab trade partner after Iraq. In 1996 Jordan exported JD130 million worth of goods to Saudi Arabia compared with JD70 million in 1995.

Crown Prince calls to implement free trade agreement with Bahrain

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan on Tuesday called for implementing a free trade agreement concluded between Jordan and Bahrain, saying that it is one of the first such agreements Jordan has signed with any country.

In a meeting with Bahraini Minister of Trade Ali Saleh Al Saleh, Prince Hassan stressed the importance of industrial integration between both countries.

The Crown Prince described the first industrial Bahraini exhibition, currently held in Amman as a good and positive step on the path of inter-Arab integration, and a clear evidence of the

strong relations linking both countries.

Prince Hassan said it is a happy coincidence that the Bahraini and Jordanian industrial exhibitions are simultaneously held here, thus providing an opportunity for Jordanian industrialists and economists to forge closer cooperation.

Prince Hassan stressed the need to develop and upgrade the standards and quality of Arab industries to conform with international specifications, noting that only quality and high standard industries can stand in the face of foreign competition in the next century.

Prince Hassan extended an

invitation to the Bahraini crown prince to visit Jordan.

Mr. Saleh expressed his country's interest in expanding commercial exchange between both countries, saying that his country will deal with Jordanian investors "in a spirit of true brotherhood and close cooperation." The meeting was attended by Minister of Industry, Trade and Supply Hani Mulki, the Bahraini Ambassador to Jordan Mohammad Ben Seif Al Musallam, Jordan's Ambassador to Bahrain Shaker Arabiyah and the president of Bahrain's Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Crown Prince underlines need to develop world understanding among Muslims and Christians Muslim residents of Western countries subjected to injustice — Prince Hassan

ISTANBUL (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Tuesday stressed the need for developing more understanding between Muslims and Christians on the basis of the common values inherent in the two monotheistic religions.

In an address to the Muslim-Christian Consultation (MCC) in Istanbul delivered on his behalf by Her Royal Highness Princess Rahmah, the Crown Prince reiterated the call for the promotion of a new interna-

tional humanitarian order embodying the common values of the monotheistic religions in order to better tackle problems plaguing many parts of the world.

In 1982, the United Nations General Assembly adopted Prince Hassan's proposal for building a new international humanitarian order.

Prince Hassan told the MCC, entitled "Perspective of Cooperation and Participation between Muslims and Christians on the Eve of the New Century," that

Muslims and Christians should promote more dialogue aimed at identifying their common values and work to overcome past and present differences and misconceptions.

Warning against developing biased and one-sided perspectives, Prince Hassan told the meeting which was organised by the Royal Academy for Islamic Civilisation Research — Al al Bayt Foundation — and the Orthodox Centre, that

(Continued on page 7)

Israel to force its curriculum upon Arab Jerusalem schools

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Israel has decided to impose its curriculum on Arab schools in east Jerusalem in a bid to stop "meddling" by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) in the education system, a city official said Tuesday.

A ministerial committee for Jerusalem decided to "ensure that the Jordanian curriculum is not being used in east Jerusalem schools and that the Israeli curriculum is," municipality spokesman Hagai Elias told AFP.

"We know that some teachers use the Jordanian textbooks. This will stop and they will have to use the same texts used by Israeli Arabs," he said.

The committee decided to impose the switch at a meeting Monday to prevent any meddling of the Palestinian (National) Authority in the management and coordination of east Jerusalem schools, he said.

City-run Arab schools in Arab east Jerusalem have until now used the curriculum and textbooks of Jordan, even after Israel seized the sector from Jordan in 1967 and annexed it as part of its capital.

Israel had turned a blind eye to the practice and even allowed observers from the West Bank, where the Jordanian curriculum is also used, to supervise final exams in east Jerusalem, said Danny Seideman, head of Jerusalem, an Israeli group for Palestinian rights in Jerusalem.

But now the PNA controls the towns of Bethlehem and Ramallah, even after Israel seized the sector from Jordan in 1967 and annexed it as part of its capital.

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EU envoy upbeat on chances to resume talks

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — The European Union (EU) envoy to the Middle East, Miguel Angel Moratinos, predicted Tuesday that there would soon be a breakthrough in efforts to bring Israelis and Palestinians back to the negotiating table.

"We're coming close," Mr. Moratinos told reporters after meeting with chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erakat to discuss the nearly three-month dead-

lock in peace negotiations caused by Israeli settlement building in Arab areas.

"I think there will be a breakthrough in the Israeli position despite the continuation of work at Jabal Abu Ghneim," he said, referring to the site of a new Jewish settlement Israel is building in Arab east Jerusalem.

"Israel has become intent on solving the political situation," said Mr. Moratinos.

(Continued on page 7)

Iraq bound to reenter Arab fold: Syrian FM

CAIRO (AFP) — Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Sharrara, whose country has reopened its borders with Baghdad for the first time in 15 years to businessmen, Tuesday said Iraq "cannot eternally" remain outside the Arab fold.

"It is difficult to imagine that Iraq, an Arab brother country, will eternally remain in the grips of the current situation," Mr. Sharrara told Egyptian state television.

"The day will come when the resolutions of the (U.N.) Security Council will be implemented and the sufferings of the Iraqi people will end," Mr. Sharrara said, when asked about the possibility of reintegrating Iraq into Arab ranks.

Iraq has been under a U.N. embargo since it invaded Kuwait in 1990.

Although Security Council Resolution 986 partially lifted the embargo so Iraq could import food and medicine, Baghdad has not yet fulfilled the main requirement for its complete removal — elimination of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Sharrara said in Cairo Monday that "no decision has been made until now concerning the opening of the borders" between Syria and Iraq.

But earlier Monday a Syrian Union of Chambers of Commerce official in Damascus said the border had been reopened for the use of businessmen from both countries.

The official also announced that an Iraqi economic delegation would visit Damascus Friday, more than 10 days after a Syrian team of businessmen travelled to Baghdad.

Diplomats and official sources in Baghdad have said the Syrian economic visit could be a stepping stone towards a political rapprochement.

Syria and Iraq are ruled by rival factions of the Baath Party and have had troubled relations since Saddam Hussein became Iraq's president in 1979. Iraq broke off diplomatic ties with its neighbour in 1980 and in 1982 Syria closed its border with Iraq.

Israel protests PNA stance on murders of land dealers

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Israel issued a sharply worded protest letter Tuesday condemning the Palestinian National Authority's (PNA) links to a recent spate of murders of Arabs accused of selling land to Jewish settlers.

Danny Naveh, the closest advisor to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and head of the Israeli peace negotiating team, said in the letter that the PNA encouraged the recent slayings by branding land sales to Jews as "treasonous" and worthy of capital punishment.

The letter, addressed to chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erakat, also complained that no Palestinian official had condemned the "callous murders" of three Arab land dealers in the Jerusalem area last month.

The three men were found murdered in the Palestinian-ruled West

Israel tries to prevent Palestinian workers from revealing secrets

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — The Israeli civil administration has shuffled Palestinian workers to prevent them from revealing sensitive information to the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), the Israeli film news service reported Tuesday.

The workers involved were transferred from the Beit Al office in the central West Bank that deals with land and property tax information to distant branches to keep them from revealing the names of Arabs who sold land to Jews.

The move comes after three Palestinians were murdered last month for allegedly selling land to Israelis. PNA officials had called for the death penalty for those involved in such deals but denied they had a hand in the killings.

Civil administration spokesman Peter Lerner refused to comment on the film report.

Palestinians working for a branch of the Israeli administration in Arab east Jerusalem involved in cancelling the identity cards of former Arab residents of the city have already been warned by the PNA to quit their jobs.

Bank town of Ramallah after PNA officials warned that sales of occupied land to Jews warranted the death penalty.

"We regard such state-

(Continued on page 7)

Government plan divides bureaucrats into three groups, 3rd to be relocated

JERASH (Petra) — The government is in the process of evaluating the performance of all its employees and will ultimately dispose of all those civil servants who are deemed to be inefficient, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali said in Jerash Tuesday.

"The government cannot keep providing 450,000 government employees with salaries, bonuses and bread coupons," Dr. Majali told the faculty and students of Jerash Private Uni-

versity.

"Citizens' businesses are delayed by the overlapping of responsibilities of an army of government employees," Dr. Majali said adding that the government was currently studying a plan that would not endanger people's livelihoods.

The plan would classify government employees into three categories: creative employees... average employees... and low performance employees.

Government departments will reallocate the third cat-

egory of employees to the private sector thereby preserving a source of income for their families.

"The current proposition is that these [low performance] employees be sent to factories in replacement of guest workers where they will be trained... they will also be paid their current salaries for a period of four months... after which the decision of their pay is left to the discretion of the new employer," elaborated

(Continued on page 7)

Fire at mental health care hospital kills 3, injures 12

By Rana Hussein
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

FUHEIS — Three people were killed and 12 others were injured in a fire that engulfed the storehouse at the National Institute for Mental Health Tuesday, officials said.

Civil Defence Department (CDD) officials said the cause of the fire, which broke out at around 10:15 a.m. in the hospital's basement and spread to the halls of one of the hospital's eight wards was still unknown.

"All we know at this time is that the fire started in the storeroom of the hospital, and the flames spread to the staircase of the third floor," Balqa CDD Director Lieutenant Colonel Sa'ed Arabiat said.

According to the CDD official, the three people who were killed in the fire incident were all patients. However, officials would not disclose their names.

One of the patients was found burnt beyond recognition near the storage room, while the other two were found dead near the third floor staircase, Lieutenant Arabiat said.

"We soaked bed covers with water and attempted to pull the two patients who were lying next to the staircase to our section, but the heat dried up the covers and we were unable to rescue them," one hospital employee said.

He told the Jordan Times that he and his colleagues evacuated patients from their section by breaking the windows and using ropes and ladders to rescue the patients.

"Luckily there was a balcony on the second floor which we used as an escape exit from the smoke and heat," he said.

Minister of Health and Medical Care Ashraf Kurdi told reporters that 147 patients and 200 employees

were evacuated from the hospital when the fire broke out. He added that all patients were returned to their sections after the fire was brought under control.

Dr. Kurdi said an investigation committee will "determine what caused the fire, learn a lesson and make sure such accident will not occur in the future."

At least 10 CDD and Armed Forces fire engines participated in bringing the fire under control in less than 40 minutes.

Lieut. Arabiat said that rescue operations were hindered because of the chaos that erupted after the fire broke out and the mental and psychological condition of the hospital patients.

According to the health minister, the injured amongst patients and nurses were all rushed to nearby hospitals suffering from suffocation and minor burns.

Turkey's deputy premier to take power, hopes to heal religious rift

ANKARA (AP) — Deputy Premier Tansu Ciller says she intends to succeed Turkey's pro-Islamic premier this month and call early elections in a bid to heal the growing rift over religion's role in society.

It was unclear whether the swap would be approved by President Suleyman Demirel, who opposes Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan's policies increasing Islam's profile in Turkish life.

A power-sharing arrangement between Ms. Ciller and Mr. Erbakan called on her to step into the prime minister's seat next year. But both politicians have been struggling to keep supporters in line.

The 11-month-old coalition of the pro-Islamic Welfare Party and Ms. Ciller's centre-right True Path Party has been so weakened by defections

that it has required support from right-wing parties for a parliamentary majority.

At a joint news conference Sunday, Mr. Erbakan said he would hand over power to Ms. Ciller in the second half of June. Their parties still were haggling over when to hold new elections. The next scheduled vote would be in 2000.

News reports said Mr. Erbakan 'wants elections in October. He, apparently, is eager to hold them before the supreme court decides at the end of the year whether Welfare should be shut down because of its pro-Islamic policies.

Mr. Erbakan leads the first Islamic-leaning government in modern Turkey and his moves to increase religion's influence have disturbed the military, which sees itself as the guardian of constitutionally protected secular traditions.

Ms. Ciller claimed the political opposition was trying to 'polarise the country between secularists and anti-secularists.'

"The healthiest way ... is to go to the people under these circumstances," she said.

Mr. Erbakan added: "Our parties will come out of this election even stronger."

Before President Demirel could designate Ms. Ciller prime minister, Mr. Erbakan would have to resign. The procedure might not go smoothly. Newspapers have speculated Mr. Demirel does not want the

Welfare-True Path coalition to continue in power.

Mr. Demirel said in a statement Sunday that the constitution did not define a power-swap procedure as planned between Ms. Ciller and Mr. Erbakan. He said he would follow the constitutional traditions when the time came to designate a prime minister, but did not elaborate.

If Mr. Erbakan resigns, Mr. Demirel could appoint the main opposition leader, Mesut Yilmaz, as premier.

Since Mr. Erbakan took power last year, the government has rearranged working hours to fit fasting times during the Muslim Holy Month of Ramadan, proposed that female civil servants be allowed to wear Islamic head covers, and called for a mosque to be built in Istanbul's main square.

The military-dominated national security council, however, has ordered Mr. Erbakan to close religious-oriented secondary schools, restrict radical Islamic publications and broadcasts, and ban Islamic-style clothing.

The council held yet another session with Mr. Erbakan Saturday, and remained dissatisfied. "We have been saying the same things for months but not seeing any results. We are greatly distressed," the generals told Mr. Erbakan Saturday, according to the Hurriyet daily newspaper.

Mr. Erbakan's foreign policy has worried Turkey's Western allies. His first trips abroad as premier were to Iran and Libya. His government, however, has presided over closer ties with Israel.



Palestinians on Tuesday put up flags on a tent at the confiscated land at Morag Jewish settlement near Rafah in Gaza Strip. The Palestinians are protesting against Israeli confiscation of farmers land at Rafah in Gaza Strip (Reuters photo)

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JORDAN

More S. Leone evacuees to return to Lebanon

BEIRUT (R) — A Middle East Airlines airliner left Beirut for Guinea Monday to bring back some 500 Lebanese refugees who escaped the coup in Sierra Leone, an airport official said.

"The Jumbo will fly to Conakry to bring back about 500 Lebanese who have taken refuge at the Lebanese embassy or in hotels there. It is due to return by Wednesday night," he said.

It is the third plane of Lebanon's national airline to arrive carrying Lebanese evacuees in a week.

Some 180 Lebanese evacuees arrived earlier Monday, most of them women and children. "Those are not soldiers, those are barbarians," Kalthoum Murad, 42, said of the soldiers of coup leader Major Johnny Paul Koroma.

Last Thursday, 242 Lebanese arrived on board an MEA plane with the bodies of two companions killed during the coup. Businessman Foad Ra'ad, said Monday he had lost everything by leaving Sierra Leone.

"I am a businessman, I have lived in Sierra Leone for 32 years. All my property was stolen but I succeeded in bringing my wife and four children alive," he said.

According to the Lebanese Foreign Ministry there are 2,000 Lebanese living in Sierra Leone but Minister of Immigrants Talal Arslan said Friday the total was 9,000, mostly businessmen. Many took shelter at the Lebanese embassy in Freetown, but a woman who arrived in Beirut last week said the status of about 500 Lebanese living outside the capital was unknown.

Security Council may vote on Iraq oil deal today

UNITED NATIONS (R) — With U.N. officials having approved a renewal of the Iraqi oil-for-food deal, the Security Council is expected to adopt a resolution as early as Wednesday to extend the plan for another six months.

American officials said they were working on a straightforward resolution, without complications, on rolling over the plan that has sparked controversy since its inception.

The current deal, which expires on June 7, calls for \$2 billion worth of oil sales over six months so Baghdad can buy food and medicine for its people, suffering from sanctions imposed in August 1990, when Iraqi troops invaded Kuwait.

While Washington has not officially announced its support to extend the plan, U.S. officials said the decision to do so was made last week.

About two-thirds of the oil revenues are for humanitarian supplies, with the remainder earmarked for compensation of Gulf war victims and the costs of destroying Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

Iraq has complained frequently that the United States had slowed down the council's procedures and had thereby delayed goods from reaching the country within a reasonable period of time.

Of 574 contracts under consideration by the council's sanctions committee, 331 were approved, 191 were placed on hold, 14 were blocked, 24 were cancelled and 38 are pending.

U.S. officials say they were responsible for most of the holds put on contracts but insist their motives were not political.

"We put a large number of

contracts on hold because Iraq had failed to endorse the contracts, a simple requirement which Iraq has insisted upon, or because they were for items not included in the distribution plan," U.S. Ambassador Bill Richardson said recently.

The officials also say they have held up all items outside of food and medicine because the United Nations did not have the monitors in Iraq to oversee such items as generators and other equipment.

Secretary General Kofi Annan has recommended a rollover of the deal in a report outlining the complicated setup of the United Nations. In distributing supplies in the Kurdish north and spot checking their allocation in the rest of Iraq.

"In light of the experience gained in the implementation of the programme in the past six months and bearing in mind the continuing humanitarian crisis in Iraq, I recommend the renewal of the programme for a further period of six months," Mr. Annan said in a report prepared for the council.

In the Kurdish areas of the north, the report said that 19.3 per cent of children under five were malnourished, of which 26 per cent were chronically malnourished and four per cent were acutely malnourished.

While Mr. Annan did not recommend an increase in the oil sales, he said the current food supply was for a "basic survival level" of 2,030 calories a day compared to a desirable minimum of 2,500 calories per person.

But some of the foodstuffs lacked vitamins, particularly iron needed by pregnant women.

Netanyahu pays televised homage to Peres

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has paid a warm tribute to his erstwhile political rival Shimon Peres who was set to be replaced Tuesday as leader of Israel's Labour Party.

"I know that you have been through difficult days lately, when it seems that you have no friends or that all your friends have left you, but the man talking to you now is a man who recognises your contribution to this country and who hopes that you will continue to contribute," Mr. Netanyahu said during a television interview of

Peres late Monday. Mr. Netanyahu, a right-wing nationalist and fierce opponent of the Palestinian self-rule agreements largely drawn up by Mr. Peres, said it was no secret that the two men "have had our differences, and I will not paper them over."

"But we must be open to appreciate the positive in people. The greatest danger facing us now, as in our past, is gratuitous hate," he said.

Mr. Peres, 73, was visibly touched by Mr. Netanyahu's surprise intervention during the interview.

"We live in and serve the

same state and I appreciate your gesture tonight," he said.

Mr. Netanyahu narrowly defeated Mr. Peres a year ago in Israel's first direct election of prime minister.

Labour Party militants were voting Tuesday for a new chairman to replace Mr. Peres with Ehud Barak, a former army chief who leads the party's hawkish right-wing, expected to easily win the election.

Mr. Peres has said he will remain politically active both in the Labour Party and beyond, possibly seeking the presidency of the Socialist International Organisation.

Britain refuses visas for Iraqi officials

LONDON (AFP) — Britain Tuesday refused visas to five senior Iraqi officials who wanted to travel to London to discuss the U.N.'s oil-for-food deal with oil companies, a foreign office spokesman said.

"There is a general policy of refusing visas to Iraqi officials," he said, adding they had been requested for a one or two-week period in the British embassy in Amman.

He said four of the officials were from the Iraqi oil ministry and the fifth worked for the state oil company.

A leading Iraqi opposition group said the Iraqis were believed to want to travel to Britain to grant concessions to a British oil company to develop the Nassirya oil field in southern Iraq.

The Iraqi National Congress (INC) said in a statement issued in London that the delegation would be led by one of the top oil industry officials. It added that the group included officials from the Military Industrialisation Organisation (MIO).

Ahmad Chalabi, president of

the executive council of the INC, said in the statement he was "extremely concerned" at the possibility that the visas would be granted.

He said if they were, it would be the first time since the 1991 Gulf war that a high-level Iraqi delegation had been allowed to come to Britain. The U.N.'s food-for-oil arrangement provides for Iraq, which is under a strict sanctions regime, to export up to \$2 billion worth of oil every six months to raise money for badly needed food and medicine.

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PROGRAMME TWO

15:35 French Programmes
16:00 Neighbours
16:30 Spell Binder
16:50 Doc. — Forests of the World
17:30 Border Town
18:00 French Programmes
19:00 News in French
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 Comedy — Grace Under Fire
20:00 Soldier's Diary
20:30 Challenges
21:10 Drama — Spencer for Hire
22:00 News in English
22:30 Land's End
23:15 American Gothic

PRAYER TIMES

03:52 Fajr
05:25 (Sunrise) Duha
12:34 Dhuhr
16:14 Asr
19:42 Maghreb
21:16 Isha

CHURCHES

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Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366
Anglican Church Tel. 652826.
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.
Armenian International Church Tel. 827126
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 834328.
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932.
Church of Nazarene Tel. 675691.
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295
English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology
Moderate weather conditions will prevail with winds north-westerly moderate to active. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly active and seas calm.

Amman 14/31
Aqaba 21/36
Deserts 13/24
Jordan Valley 19/25
Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 30, Aqaba 34 Humidity readings: Amman 26 per cent, Aqaba 31 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS NIGHT DUTY

Dr. Khalil Tushiq 757253
Dr. Bahjat Bader 832642
Dr. Nasser Ibrahim 830432
Dr. Wafiq Qaddumi 893542
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 890280
Al Asama pharmacy 637055
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660
Nairokh pharmacy 623672
Najib pharmacy 847632
IRBID:
Dr. Zakaria Malkawi 218615
Al Quds pharmacy (—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Walid Nabhan 995743
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre. 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200

Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Husseini Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, 644281/6
Aidleh Maternity, 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 607071
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Muasher Hospital 667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 77101/3
Al-Bashir 775111/26
Army, Marka 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
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Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
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Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)990990
IRBID:

Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275
Ibn Al Nafees Hospital (02)247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

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ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ)
Flights
08:05 Damascus (RJ)
09:25 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
09:30 Jeddah (RJ)
10:15 Larnaca (RJ)
15:55 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:40 Toronto, Montreal (RJ)

18:05 Istanbul (RJ)
19:05 Rome (RJ)
19:10 Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)
19:10 London, Berlin (RJ)
19:25 Paris, Geneva (RJ)
20:35 Madrid, Paris (RJ)
00:15 Beirut (RJ)
01:05 Cairo (RJ)
04:25 Singapore, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)

Other Flights

09:15 Karachi, Abu Dhabi (PK)
10:30 Cairo (MS)
11:00 Sanaa, Hudaidah (IY)
12:00 Jeddah (SV)
13:00 Al' Arish (PF)
13:10 Doha, Abu Dhabi (GF)
13:50 Tel Aviv (LY)
14:30 Tunis (TU)
15:05 Vienna (OS)
16:20 Algiers (AH)
17:00 Doha (Q7)
19:30 Istanbul, Damascus (PK)
21:10 Beirut (ME)
21:10 Paris, Damascus (AF)
23:20 Istanbul (TK)
23:25 Amsterdam (KL)
23:30 Athens (OA)
05:15 Ankara (TK)

DEPARTURES

07:00 Larnaca (RJ)
09:00 Amsterdam, New York

(RJ)
10:50 Rome (RJ)
11:45 Berlin, London (RJ)
12:40 Casablanca (RJ)
12:45 Istanbul (RJ)
20:10 Colombo (RJ)
20:35 Beirut (RJ)
21:00 New Delhi (RJ)
21:10 Cairo (RJ)
21:10 Riyadh, Dhahran (RJ)
21:15 Calcutta, Bangkok (RJ)
21:20 Bombay (RJ)
22:05 Dubai, Muscat (RJ)
23:45 Sanaa (RJ)

Other Flights

06:50 Larnaca (CY)
08:45 Beirut (ME)
09:25 London (BA)
10:00 Damascus, Istanbul (PK)
11:20 Cairo (MS)
12:00 Hudaidah, Sanaa (IY)
13:30 Jeddah (SV)
14:00 Al' Arish (PF)
14:00 Bahrain, Muscat (GF)
15:10 Tel Aviv (LY)
15:30 Tunis (TU)
15:50 Vienna (OS)
17:20 Sharjah (AH)
17:50 Doha (Q7)
20:15 Abu Dhabi, Karachi (PK)
23:55 Damascus, Paris (AF)
00:25 Damascus, Amsterdam (KL)
00:25 Ankara (TK)
04:00 Athens (OA)
06:15 Istanbul (TK)



HRH Crown Prince Hassan Tuesday meets with Omar Abdul Rahman, adviser to Malaysian Prime Minister Mahatir Mohammad and president of the Malaysian Academy of Sciences and his accompanying delegation at the Royal Court (Petra photo)

Crown Prince stresses value of cooperation with Malaysia

AMMAN (Petra) — HRH Crown Prince Hassan Tuesday underlined the value of cooperation in scientific and technological fields between east and west Asian countries saying that such cooperation could open an important door for Jordan.

Speaking at a meeting with Omar Abdul Rahman, adviser to Malaysian Prime Minister Mahatir Mohammad and president of the Malaysian Academy of Sciences and his accompanying delegation, Prince Hassan emphasised the need for Jordanian and Malaysian institutions to initiate cooperation. The Crown Prince cited the success of Malaysian universi-

ty experiments in technology as factors which would help the development process.

He also underlined the importance of quality, productivity and transparency in inter-regional investment. Here he referred to Jordanian Scientific Week which will be held this summer and spoke of the prospect of Malaysian institutions taking part.

The Crown Prince noted that Jordan has been cooperating with Japan in industrial policies and with Canada in administrative reform programmes with a view to benefiting from both.

Dr. Abdul Rahman conveyed to the Crown Prince

a message from Prime Minister Mahatir in which he extended an invitation to Prince Hassan to visit Malaysia. The visiting official said Jordan's achievements so far in the fields of science and technology have been pioneering steps.

He also reviewed Malaysia's development plans towards the year 2020, expressing hope that these plans would advance his country at the industrial and scientific levels.

The meeting was attended by Minister of Industry and Trade and Supply Hani Mulki and Acting President of the Royal Scientific Society Said Alloush.

Prosecutor asks for Masri conviction

By Kana Hussein
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The criminal prosecutor in the case of Mazen Masri, a father accused of killing his two children last September in Amman, Tuesday called for his conviction on all charges.

Mr. Masri, 34, is formally charged with two counts of premeditated murder and three counts of attempted murder by the prosecution. The defendant had confessed on Sept. 25, 1996 to poisoning his two children Hanin, eight, and Hani, six, with cyanide before leaving for work on the morning of Sept. 11.

"All the evidence points to the fact that Mr. Masri killed his children because

of problems with his wife, and because, as he confessed, his children were more attached to their mother than to him," Prosecutor Ali Abu Hjeleh said in his closing argument.

Mr. Abu Hjeleh added that Mr. Masri confessed willingly in front of the attorney general, the Shmeisani police director, the criminal prosecutor and his own wife.

"Mr. Masri stated on Sept. 25 that he confessed willingly in order to rid himself of the guilt of killing his two children," Mr. Abu Hjeleh said.

The defendant also confessed to a previous murder attempt in which he tried to kill his wife and two children on August 10 of the same year by opening a gas

cylinder while the three slept in the couple's bedroom.

But in January of this year, Mr. Masri retracted his previous statements to authorities, and stated that he fabricated the confessions to stop the psychological pressure he said he was facing from his investigators.

At the end of Tuesday's court session defence Attorney Ahmad Najdawi asked the court for time to prepare his closing argument.

The court, presided over by Judge Abdul Rahman Tawfiq and Judges Mifleh Mubeidin and Ismael Hmouz, postponed the case until June 22, to hear the defence's closing argument.

Government considers introducing road tolls

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Public Works Nasser Lawzi Tuesday said that the government is studying the prospect of introducing various types of road tolls in order to pay for road maintenance work.

According to Mr. Lawzi, Jordan has invested nearly \$3 billion in its 7,041 kilometre road network over the last 30 years, and that as regular maintenance is a must, road management strategy should shift from strictly building of roads to plans for the improvement of the existing network.

Thus, he said, the government is considering creating a special fund to finance road maintenance work.

Addressing the opening of a two-day workshop on the management of a road maintenance fund at the InterContinental Hotel, Mr. Lawzi emphasised that such maintenance is needed to protect the considerable investments made in the country's roads.

"The majority of countries in the Middle East

depend heavily on the land transport of goods and passengers," the minister added.

Minister of Finance Suleiman Hafez said that a proposed road maintenance fund is meant to alleviate the burden on the state's treasury and therefore must be independent and managed by a special board comprising the private sector and the business community.

Delegates from Palestine, Lebanon, Yemen, New Zealand, Lithuania, South Africa, the World Bank and several ministries and trade unions are taking part in the meeting.

The attendees will discuss financial difficulties facing ministries of public works in road maintenance demands and prospects for the introduction of road tolls.

A World Bank delegate told Jordan Television that "the World Bank is assisting the government of Jordan in undertaking what is called the third transport project. This project is



Minister of Public Works Nasser Lawzi Tuesday addresses a workshop on management of road maintenance funds (Petra photo)

financing a number of roads in Jordan plus six or seven road rehabilitation projects, and we are financing the Ras Al Naqab to

Wadi Yunum section of the Amman-Aqaba Highway." During the first session, delegates discussed prospects for collecting

fees for road use, transit fees, and fines for extra axial weight, in addition to aid for the fund from the World Bank.

Bahraini firm to supply Jordan with JD 3.5m in overhead power cables

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan and Bahrain Tuesday signed a JD 3.5 million contract for the supply of overhead cables for a 400-kilovolt power linkage between Jordan and Syria.

According to the contract the cables will be supplied by the Mital Company in Bahrain. The cables will be installed inside Jordanian territory for the Kingdom's portion of the power linkage scheme with Syria.

The Director of the National Electric Power Company (NEPC) Mohammad Saeed Arafat, who signed the contract for Jordan, told Jordan Television that the Jordan-Syria power linkage is part of the larger electric power project involving Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Iraq and Turkey.

He said that the first part of the linkage, between Jordan and Egypt, is expected to be completed before the end of this year. The second phase, he said, between Jordan and Syria, will be

completed before the end of 1998.

The cost of the linkage between Jordan and Syria is JD 22 million within the Jordanian territory alone.

NEPC Assistant Director General Hani Al Rai said the two-part linkage with Syria entails installing cables along 40 kilometres from a transformer station south of Amman to Shafa Badran north of the capital, and 60 kilometres extending from Shafa Badran to the Syrian-Jordanian borders.

Mr. Al Rai said the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development based in Kuwait is funding the Arab part of the project.

Hamed Zaiani, the general manager of the Mital Company, which specialises in high voltage cables, signed the agreement at the ceremony attended by visiting Bahraini Minister of Trade Ali Saleh Al Saleh.

Jordan's \$300m spent on refugees is a national expense — Majali

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Tuesday explained that the \$300 million Jordan provides annually from its budget to ensure services to the Palestinian refugee camps in the Kingdom are not part of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) funds.

Addressing a regular Cabinet meeting, Dr. Majali said that some reports in the local news had erroneously linked the government budget figure with funds from UNRWA.

His statement came one day after HRH Crown Prince Hassan stated that a gathering at the UNRWA Wadi Seer Training Centre that the Kingdom is in fact the largest contributor country to the Palestinian refugees in that \$300 million of its annual budget is allocated to providing various services to the residents of the refugee camps. Prince Hassan added that the amount spent by Jordan nearly matches UNRWA's \$360 million

annual budget.

At Tuesday cabinet meeting, ministers discussed preparations for the Jordanian higher committee meetings with Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Libya, Algeria and Qatar. They formed a committee to arrange for these meetings comprising representatives from the ministries of Planning, and Industry and Trade and other concerned departments.

Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Tawfiq Kreishan reported on his recent visit to Tunisia to attend the Arab Cities Organisation and meet with Tunisian officials. Mr. Kreishan signed a memorandum of understanding on regulating the exchange of expertise in municipal and rural affairs and invited his Tunisian counterpart to visit Jordan.

Minister of Social Development Mohammad Khair Mansour reported on his inspection tour of various governorates to examine services offered to the

underprivileged by the National Aid Fund.

Minister of Public Works and Housing Nasser Lawzi and Minister of Finance Suleiman Hafez spoke about their participation in a workshop starting later Tuesday aimed at creating a fund for the maintenance of roads which is to be created in cooperation with the World Bank.

The cabinet also formed a delegation, led by Minister of State for Information Affairs Samir Muiawi, to take part in the meetings of Arab ministers of information in Cairo, May 28 and 29.

The Cabinet approved a series of agreements concluded with Algeria on trade and land and maritime transport and ratified an executive programme on education between Jordan and Algeria for the years 1997, through 1999.

The ministers also appointed Khaled Tayeb as director-general of the Jordan Cooperative Organisation.

Experts show how tree rings can be studied to detect future droughts

By Tanya Habbjouqa
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Experts from the University of Arizona (UA) in the U.S. introduced the science of dendrochronology as a tool in detecting future droughts and achieving a sustainable environmental plan.

Professors from the UA Laboratory of Tree Ring Research (LTRR) led 12 Jordanians in a two-week training course which provided them with an opportunity to conduct field work and develop uses for the technique in the Kingdom.

Dendrochronology is the study of the annual rings of trees to determine the date of the tree and its history, thereby allowing a researcher to detect changes in a tree's environment.

Researchers can use this information to reconstruct the variations of precipitation, temperature, soil moisture, river flow, and the frequency of extreme droughts over several centuries.

"Water resources in the Middle East are shrinking while the population explodes," LTRR researcher Ramzi Touchan said.

Dr. Touchan said that Jordan's demand for water in the year 2030 will increase six-fold of that of 1985.

He said that if a drought occurred, it would have severe effects on agriculture, inhabitants, animals, and

forage production.

According to LTRR literature, a persistent drought in the Middle East would force nomadic people and their animals to migrate, looking for water resources and grazing areas around Syria, Iraq, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia.

Such human movement causes those areas with limited forage production to be overgrazed and results in soil deterioration.

With those factors in mind, dendrochronology researchers can determine past weather patterns and the frequency of droughts and wet periods, which in turn can be used to anticipate the probability of those events occurring in the future.

Conducted at the Jordan Badia Research and Development Programme (JBRDP) facilities, the training course included participants from the Ministry of Agriculture, the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN), the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment, and an archaeology student from Yarmouk University, Dr. Touchan said.

LTRR Director Malcolm Hughes stated that students were quickly grasping the technique, and were already researching methods in which dendrochronology could be useful to the country.

"Jordanians can find

uses for this technique that we could not dream about," Prof. Hughes said. "They know the practical problems and can apply the methods to forestry management or archaeology."

According to Prof. Hughes, other uses for dendrochronology can include tree ring dating for wooden archaeological sites or for eliminating illegal tree cutting.

"Such a method is already in use in Chile," he said. "A certain tree has been illegal to cut since 1974, and foresters can determine if that wood had been cut after that time."

A more practical use for the dendrochronology technique has been demonstrated in studying droughts in Morocco, Prof. Hughes said.

LTRR professor Charles Stockton studied the six-year drought in Morocco, applying dendrochronology techniques, he said.

"How often will such droughts occur?" Prof. Hughes asked. "Will it happen several times a century or several times over a thousand years?"

Prof. Stockton built a tree ring chart and determined that six-year droughts had occurred over the last 1000 years.

"So with practical application, he asserted, that it could happen again, but that it was not on a massive scale," Prof. Hughes explained.

Dr. Touchan stressed



Ramzi Touchan of the University of Arizona Laboratory of Tree Ring Research studies annual tree rings at the Jordanian Badia Research and Development Programme (photo by Tanya Habbjouqa)

that such research would allow researchers to create a concrete management plan on how to deal with the climate.

"Researchers could determine methods to deal with future droughts through water conservation or the planting of crops that do not require much water," he said.

When the Jordan Times asked if students would be able to apply the method on their own, Dr. Touchan said the method was low cost and could be applied in a few

months to one year.

Future plans include the further training of Jordanian students at the LTRR in Arizona (once funding is secured) and further dendrochronology studies in the region, Prof. Hughes said.

Dr. Touchan thanked JBRDP Head of Public Relations Sharifa Zein Nasser for providing accommodations and aiding the development of the course, and the Ministry of Agriculture for providing transportation.

Bohemia Saxophone Quartet to mix and match

By Jean-Claude Elias
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Embassy of the Czech Republic in Amman has invited four exceptional saxophonists to perform in the capital this week.

The Bohemia Saxophone Quartet first performed on Tuesday at the Bisharat Golf Course. The group will play again tonight in the gardens of Darat Al Funun in Jabal Weibdeh.

The quartet will play works by Leonard Bernstein, Edouard Grief, G.F. Haendel, Antonio Vivaldi, George Gershwin and other composers. Following the current trend, the ensemble will mix modern classical music with more traditional "classical" numbers.

Indeed, one of the pieces they are to play, the "Petit Quartet" was written by Jean Francaix a contemporary composer born in 1912, another by Libor Drevikovsky, born in 1969, and still, they will gladly perform music by Vivaldi.

The Bohemian Saxophone Quartet is the combination of four fine, virtuoso saxophonists, Pavel Fiedler on soprano, Roman Fojticek on alto, Pavel



Bohemia Saxophone Quartet

Skma on tenor and Jiri Hanzlik on baritone saxophone.

An instrument that is not often played in Jordan, for the wide public the saxophone remains the sign, the unmistakable signature of jazz music.

Groups like Bohemia Saxophone Quartet not only do justice to the instrument by playing modern classical music especially written for it, but also intro-

duce innovation and freshness to the traditional repertoire by bringing new arrangements to older baroque and romantic compositions.

The quartet was established in Prague in 1990 and has since performed in several countries. The concerts in Amman are organised in cooperation with Freddy for Music.

Afghan Taleban report capture of Golbahar

PUL-I-KHUMRI, Afghanistan (R) — The purist Islamic Taleban militia said it had captured the town of Golbahar, north of Kabul, in a big offensive Tuesday.

A senior Taleban official said the Taleban had seized Golbahar and part of the nearby town of Jabul Siraj from forces loyal to opposition leader Ahmad Shah Masood.

"This morning the Taleban launched a very wide offensive on Golbahar, clearing the area. We have also captured the rear of Jabul Siraj and Mr. Masood's forces are now surrounded there," Taleban Information Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi told reporters.

There was no independent confirmation of the fall of Golbahar. The Pakistan-based Afghan Islamic Press agency said.

Taleban jets had pounded the village earlier Tuesday. Mr. Masood, who is based in the Panjshir Valley, captured Jabul Siraj Friday,

cutting off a Taleban force now based in Pul-i-Khumri, north of the Hindu Kush Mountain range.

Jabal Siraj, 70 kilometres north of Kabul, sits at the foot of the strategic Salang Pass, a key artery connecting the Afghan capital with the north of the country.

Fighting erupted north of Kabul early Tuesday as the Taleban militia launched an offensive against opposition forces who have scored battlefield successes in the past few days.

Taleban infantry, under cover of tank fire, made some territorial gains, frontline commanders told AFP.

"We started our attack at dawn and have reached Dehali Bazaar and Jamalagha," said the Taleban.

These two centres are north of the Kapisa provincial capital of Mahmud-i-Raqi, and south of the Parwan province towns of Golbahar and Jabul Siraj held by opposition fighters loyal to Mr. Masood.

"Our offensive is against Golbahar, not Jabul Siraj," the Taleban said.

The reason the Taleban cannot attack Jabul Siraj directly is that a major bridge to its south has been blown up by Mr. Masood's fighters, and no vehicles can pass.

The bridge is located north of the Parwan provincial capital of Charikar, which is now a major garrison town for the hundreds of Taleban reinforcements rushed to this frontline following the fall of Jabul Siraj to Mr. Masood last Friday.

Golbahar and Jabul Siraj are important targets for the Taleban, as the first controls access to Mr. Masood's native Panjshir Valley, while the second controls access to the strategic Salang tunnel which cuts through the Hindu Kush Mountains.

North of the Salang tunnel in the Baghlan province's de facto capital of Pul-i-Khumri a 2,000 to 3,000-strong force of Taleban has been

trapped for a week after all access roads were cut by opposition forces.

This force, led by Minister of Culture and Information Mullah Amir Khan Muttaqi, was on its way to the northern Afghan capital Mazar-i-Sharif following its fall to the Taleban May 24, but their ethnic Uzbek foes-turned-allies again changed sides and turned on the Islamic militia.

Also trapped in Pul-i-Khumri with the Taleban are Kabul-based foreign correspondents Alan Johnston of the BBC and Tim Johnston of Reuters together with their Afghan drivers and interpreters, and a German journalist.

Meanwhile, Afghanistan's anti-Taleban alliance that was nearly defeated in a reversal of fortunes two weeks ago has been restructured and renamed, an opposition spokesman said Tuesday.

"Now we have created the United Islamic Front for

Salvation of Afghanistan (UIFSA)," said General Homayoon Fauzi contacted by telephone in Mazar-i-Sharif.

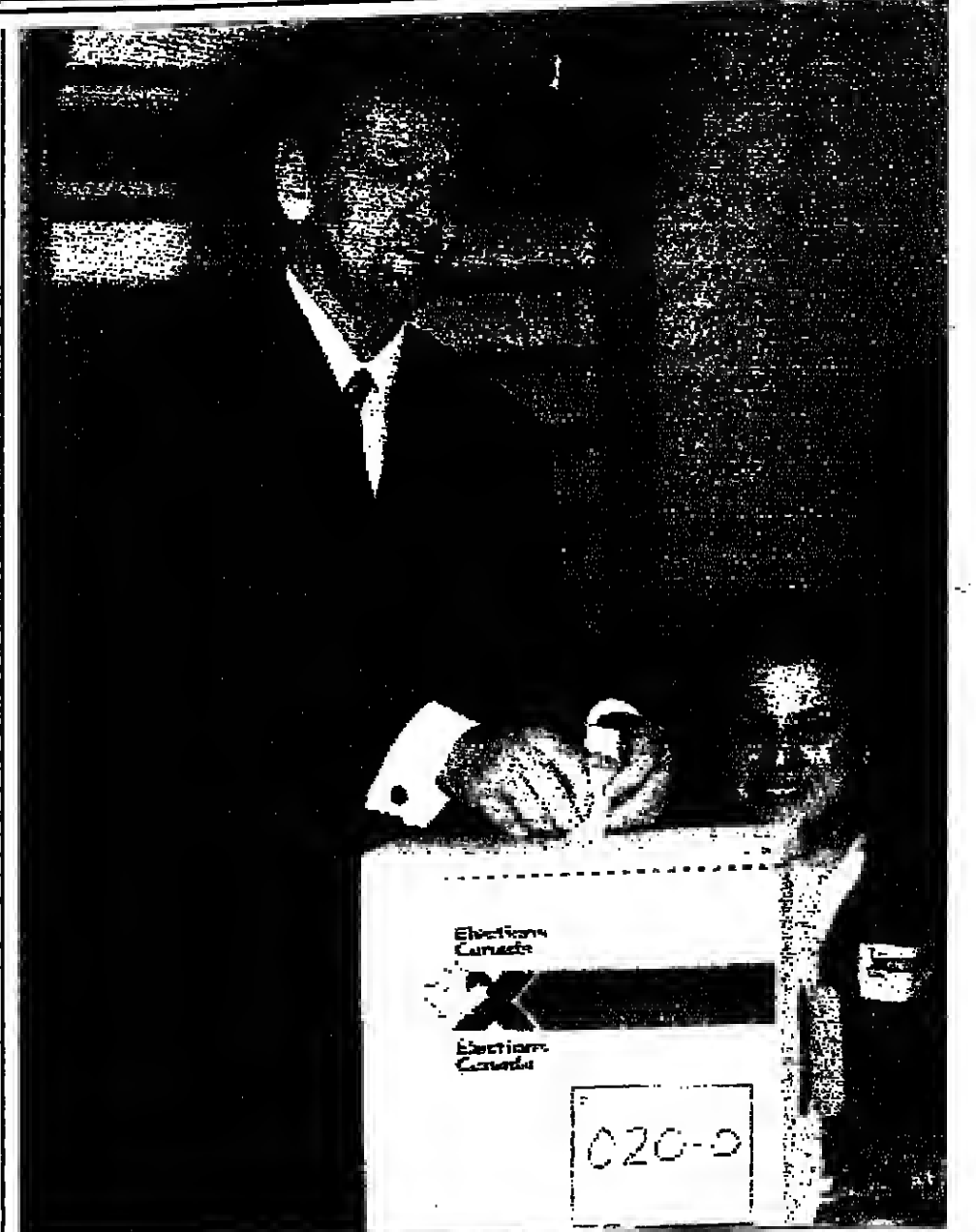
The front includes the National Islamic Movement, Mr. Masood's forces, the Shiite Hezb-i-Wahdat, the Hezb-i-Islami of former Premier Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and a former Mujahideen faction headed by Pir Sayed Gailani, he said.

The head of the new front has not yet been appointed, Gen. Fauzi said.

UIFSA replaces the previous opposition coalition Council for Defence of Afghanistan under ousted warlord Abdul Rashid Dostum who fled Afghanistan after his key Commander Abdul Malik revolted against him last month.

Gen. Fauzi said the new alliance was willing to hold talks with the Taleban.

"If the Taleban want, we are ready to talk with them, but only through our front," he said.



Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien casts his ballot in Grand Mere, east of Montreal, in the general election. Mr. Chretien won his second term and kept the ruling Liberals in power (Renter photo)

Canada's Liberal Party reelected with slim majority

OTTAWA (R) — Liberal Prime Minister Jean Chretien's government was reelected Monday with a paper-thin majority in a federal election that accentuated Canada's regional differences and conflict over Quebec's secessionist aspirations.

Chretien's Liberals won 155 of the 301 seats in parliament — almost 100 of them in Canada's industrial heartland of Ontario. The party's near sweep of Ontario offset stinging losses in Atlantic Canada that cost the Liberals many seats including those of two cabinet ministers.

The Western Canada-based right-wing Reform Party, which advocates a tough line on Quebec, ousted the separatist Bloc Quebecois as the official opposition.

"The reduced support for the government is a warning that the government must heed," declared Reform leader Preston Manning.

"The warning is that you cannot break your promises, and you can't go through an election with nothing to say on big issues like jobs and unity without paying a price. I trust that the government got that message," Mr. Manning said from his campaign headquarters in Calgary, Alberta.

The Liberals fell short of their 177 seats won in the 1993 federal election, but won their first back-to-back majorities in 44 years.

Reform won all its seats in its strongholds of Alberta and British Columbia, failing to make a breakthrough in the central and eastern provinces.

The Bloc Quebecois won 44 of Quebec's 75 seats despite stumbling early in the campaign.

As with French President Jacques Chirac, Mr. Chretien gambled by calling early elections, but unlike Mr. Chirac — whose right-wing alliance lost Sunday — Mr. Chretien held on to a slim majority.

Mr. Chretien pledged, however, to govern for all Canadians.

"We will approach our mandate with a national spirit, a national outlook and a national vision," he said as he declared victory.

"I pledge to govern for the whole country in the interest of all Canadians, not just those who voted for my party, in the interest of all regions of Canada, not just those

who voted for the Liberals."

Reform capitalised on western anger with big government and with attempts to appease Quebec. Reform leader Manning was denounced by several rivals during the five-week campaign as an anti-Quebec bigot and accused of even pushing the country toward "civil war" — a charge he angrily denied.

"This campaign has demonstrated once again that the reconciliation of Quebec's aspirations with those of the rest of Canada are impossible," Bloc Quebecois leader Gilles Duceppe said, proclaiming once again the goal of Quebec sovereignty.

The once powerful Conservative Party, reduced in 1993 from a majority to just two seats, won 20 seats in the new parliament, virtually all in Atlantic Canada and Quebec. Alexa McDonough — leader of the leftist New Democratic Party (NDP), which doubled its seats — boasted that hers was the only opposition party with representatives from coast to coast.

The Liberals, whose proudest achievement in their first term was slashing Canada's budget deficit, suffered a sharp rebuke in the Atlantic provinces, Canada's poorest region, where Defence Minister Doug Young and Health Minister David Dingwall lost their seats.

Mr. Young had introduced unemployment insurance reform and Mr. Dingwall was blamed for health care cuts.

"Evidently, we cannot touch programmes without paying the price," said Mr. Young. "Tonight we are being punished because people have the impression that we penalised them over the last two or three years with the changes that were made to employment insurance, but also to other programmes."

Television networks projected that the Liberals would win 155 seats, just four more than a majority. Reform rose to 60 seats from the 52 it won last time, while the Bloc shrank to 44 from the 54 it won in 1993. The NDP jumped to 21 seats from nine.

The Liberals won about 38.5 per cent of the popular vote, with Reform and the Conservatives at about 19 per cent each.

About 67 per cent of eligible voters cast their votes, down from 70 per cent in 1993.

U.N.: Angolan army continues offensive

LUANDA (R) — Angolan troops are pressing ahead with an offensive in the diamond-rich northeast of the country, driving thousands of civilians from areas held by the UNITA movement, a United Nations official said Monday.

"At least 2,500 people have arrived in Nzaje in the past week," the official said, referring to a government-held city near the border of the former Zaire, now called Democratic Republic of Congo.

"Over the weekend these people were saying the fighting is still quite intense to the south," the official, who asked not to be named, told Reuters Monday.

Military and diplomatic sources say the army offensive in Lunda Norte province is the highest in Angola for two years.

A yet-to-be-completed U.N. inquiry, seen by reporters in Luanda Monday, said those arriving in Nzaje spoke of heavy fighting between army troops and UNITA forces which had caused "many casualties."

UNITA is a former rebel movement that fought the government for control of Angola after independence from Portugal in 1975 but is now its uneasy partner in a government of national unity formed last month.

The Angolan government says the offensive is meant to secure the northern border with Congo but is not directed against UNITA, which still dominates the area.

Instead, the government says, it wants to drive out ex-soldiers from Rwanda's former Hutu regime and troops loyal to Mobutu Sese Seko, fallen leader of for-

mer Zaire, which it says have infiltrated the area.

Mr. Mobutu once backed UNITA and the army action, which is threatening a fragile peace process sponsored by the U.N. and backed by the United States, was launched after he was overthrown last month.

The U.N. report also said new land mines had been laid around Nzaje and that U.N. peacekeepers in the area have had their movements severely restricted by the Angolan army.

The investigators further reported that a refugee camp in the far northeastern corner of Angola had been overrun by government troops.

But the report, quoting residents who live near the camp, said many of the mostly Rwandan Hutu refugees had escaped to the south along the Cassai River.

At least 7 wounded in second Albania blast

TIRANA (R) — Bomb attacks injured 27 people in the Albanian capital Tirana Monday, raising tension ahead of June 29 elections intended to restore stability in the chaotic Balkan nation.

At least seven people were wounded, three critically, at a bus stop, minutes before the 9 p.m. curfew.

A few hours earlier, a bomb injured 20 people in the crowded cafe Freskia a few hundred metres away in Skanderbeg Square. The cafe was known as a rendezvous for Socialists, the main opposition to President Sali Berisha.

At the bus stop, one policeman said the bomb apparently went off accidentally when the person carrying it was boarding a bus. But another thought it was thrown from a passing car at the bus stop, where about a dozen people were waiting.

A doctor at the military hospital told Reuters that seven people were injured, three of them seriously, and the most severely wounded

were undergoing surgery. Albania's leftists and rightists accused one another of using violence to upset elections.

Meanwhile, A team of Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) advisers reached the anarchic Albanian town of Vlore under heavy military escort Monday to help prepare the ground for elections on June 29.

Six taxis bearing OSCE stickers left the capital Tirana in the morning for the southern towns of Gjirokastra, Fier and Vlore to size up the situation before the crucial vote.

At one point halfway down the potholed road, two Italian armoured personnel carriers and a jeep escorting the OSCE cars lost contact but managed to join them later near Fier.

Heinrich Pichler, an Austrian elections expert, said they would start meeting local authorities and the parties Tuesday.

"We came here to monitor the preparation of the elections, the registration pro-

cess, the election itself and the counting process," Mr. Pichler told Reuters.

"Our aim is to make sure these elections will be organised in a very fair and proper manner so that these elections can be recognised internationally as being fair elections."

He added that he did not know yet the specific problems they might encounter in Vlore.

"What we do know is a lot of documents were destroyed during the recent events. So a lot of work has to be done here. But that is basically the work of the Albanians," he added.

Vlore became the centre of protest against the Democratic Party government of President Sali Berisha after the collapse of pyramid investment schemes left many Albanians destitute.

Protests turned violent after the headquarters of the secret police in town was attacked and a weapons depot was ransacked. Armoured vehicles were broken into throughout the country,

large swathes of which remain outside the government's control.

Some 150 people were killed in Vlore and nearby communes in riots. Afterwards, the international community pushed Albania to name a multi-party interim government and hold early elections to stabilise the turbulent Balkan country.

Holding elections in Vlore, a city of 80,000 to 100,000 people and one that seems to be ruled by fear with only a few hours of social life, will be anything but ideal.

The OSCE team spent most of the time after they arrived at the headquarters of Italian troops in the 6,500-strong multinational force or travelling under escort in the town's almost deserted streets.

Unlike other parts of Albania where a 9 p.m.-to-5 a.m. curfew is imposed, residents prefer to lock themselves in earlier or stay nearby their houses a few hours after midday because of gunmen who roam the streets.

Russia considers Georgia pullout

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Russia, accusing the Georgian parliament of "political blackmail," said Monday it was considering whether or not to keep its peacekeeping troops around Georgia's breakaway Abkhazia region beyond next month.

The Georgian parliament is "forcing us to rethink the advisability of the further presence of Russian peacekeepers in the conflict zone and the possibility of fulfilling their mandate," President Boris Yeltsin's spokesman and foreign affairs adviser was quoted as saying by Interfax News Agency.

The Georgian parliament passed a resolution last week seeking to end the Russian peacekeepers' mandate in Abkhazia if no progress was made in bringing peace to the region by the end of their current mandate on Aug. 1.

Sergei Yastrzhembsky, Mr. Yeltsin's spokesman, called that "political blackmail."

Observers say the departure of the peacekeepers could pave the way for a renewal of fighting between the separatists and Georgian government forces.

Russian troops act as peacekeepers in the Gali region, controlling a zone separating Georgia from the Black Sea province of Abkhazia. Abkhazia has run itself as a de facto independent state since driving Georgian forces out in 1993.

Nearly four years of peace talks have reached a dead end. The Abkhaz still want more independence than Georgia is ready to tolerate.

The Tbilisi government is demanding that the 2,500 Russian peacekeepers parolling the buffer zone take on a more aggressive mandate, helping refugees from the region resettle and expanding their zone of activity.

Georgia said last week it was claiming a part of the Black Sea Fleet, further raising tensions with Russia just as Moscow and Kiev reached an agreement on the long-disputed issue.

Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze said Soviet-built ships based in the Georgian port of Poti had been spirited away in 1992 "without the agreement and without consultation with the Georgian government."

Russia insists that Georgia received its full share of the assets of the former Soviet Union.

Meanwhile, A Russian peacekeeper died when his armoured personnel carrier was blown up in the separatist Georgian region of Abkhazia, amid growing pressure on the Russian troops to leave, officials said Tuesday.

The car was destroyed by an explosive device in the Gali district Monday, Interfax quoted the Defence Ministry as saying. A lieutenant died and a captain and a private were wounded and taken to hospital.

Russian peacekeepers are stationed in Gali to keep apart Georgian troops and Abkhaz rebels.

Abkhaz Security Service head Astamur Tarba accused Georgians of planting a remote-controlled explosive device in hopes of "undermining the peacekeeping operation," Interfax said.

Meanwhile, the Defence Ministry said Tuesday that it was already drafting plans to withdraw the peacekeepers, and also possibly a parachute regiment based in Abkhazia, in readiness for any decision in Moscow to pull out.

Jakarta denounces U.S. comments on Indonesian elections

JAKARTA (AFP) — The Indonesian government Tuesday denounced a U.S. statement on the country's legislative elections as lacking understanding of the system here.

"I regret that statement because it shows that there is no accurate appreciation of what has been developed in Indonesia," Foreign Minister Ali Alatas said according to the state-run Antara news agency.

U.S. State Department spokesman John Dinger said in Washington Thursday "we believe Indonesia should now move towards a political system in which the voice of the people can be heard."

Alatas said the statement showed ignorance about the Indonesian democracy system. "I hope that at least there is a preparedness from other nations to try understand that the democracy being developed by the Indonesian nation is different," he added.

He said Washington, and other countries, should understand that the country's particular brand of democracy — Pancasila democracy — named after the country's state ideology, was developing.

Pancasila, which literally means "five tennets," gathers five loosely defined principles — belief in God, humanitarianism, national unity, the people's sovereignty through deliberation and consensus and social justice for all.

Analysts have defined Pancasila democracy as one where there is no frontal opposition and where decision making is reached through consen-

sus.

Alatas also lashed out at the foreign press for their reporting on elections in Indonesia, saying they were prejudiced and had reported the polls from "a negative side only."

Indonesia's 27-day electoral campaign that ended five days before polling day on May 29, was marked by sporadic mass rioting and violence that left over 260 people dead.

While most of the deaths were linked to election-related traffic accidents, a riot in Banjarmasin, the capital of South Kalimantan province, on the last day of campaigning May 23 left 124 dead, most of whom were trapped in a commercial centre set on fire by rioters.

Violence also followed vote counting in various towns in Java, including in Madura, an island off east Java, where the authorities will repeat voting Wednesday after ballot boxes were lost or burned during rioting there.

The ruling Golkar party has scored a record high majority, winning more than 74 per cent of the vote counted. Some 90 per cent of the registered votes have been counted so far.

Indonesians indirectly vote for their representatives in parliament by choosing a party rather than from a list of named candidates. Only 425 seats are elected while another 75 are allotted to the military who do not vote in elections.



South Korean students check the condition of a riot policeman who was badly beaten by protesters Monday during Seoul's worst student violence in almost a year. Students confirm that this policeman was taken to a nearby hospital and died shortly after arriving (Renter photo)

Autopsy rules out student beating in S. Korea

SEOUL (R) — An autopsy on a South Korean riot policeman killed during campus clashes Monday cast doubt on reports he was clubbed to death by students and supported student claims he was killed by a police vehicle.

"It looks like he was hit by a car," an official at the Supreme Public Prosecutor's Office said Tuesday after studying the autopsy report.

Earlier, a leftwing campus body that orchestrated the violence issued a statement saying the 21-year-old officer was one of four run over by an armoured teargas launcher in fierce clashes outside a Seoul University.

The death raised the heat in a five-day confrontation between authorities and radical students, many of them armed with metal pipes and petrol bombs.

Assigning blame will have an important bearing on how the violence plays

out. Police last August launched a military-style assault on a Seoul campus to end a student revolt.

President Kim Young-Sam had demanded a thorough investigation into the death and "severe punishment" for those responsible, state radio reported.

State prosecutors Monday called for the arrest of "criminals" behind the death of Yoo Ji-Woong and a round-up of leaders of the leftwing Hanchongryong body.

Officer Yoo Ji-Woong died after thousands of students punched a hole in a police cordon around Hanyang University and began lashing out with metal bars.

Since violence began Friday, 215 police officers have been injured, 40 severely, according to police figures. A total of 34 students have been arrested.

One student was in hospital recovering from brain

surgery after being injured in fierce hand-to-hand combat on a bridge leading to Hanyang University.

By early evening Tuesday, several thousand students who had gathered at Seoul University slipped off the campus with hars and fire-bombs and began fanning out across the city through the subway system.

The students had set up an altar on the campus grounds to pay their respects to Yoo.

Students are demanding Mr. Kim's resignation, picking up on a popular wave of anger against the head of state over his refusal to reveal his spending in 1992 presidential elections.

Opposition parties insist his campaign cost at least 10 times the legal limit and was partly hankrolled the scandal-ridden Hanbo Group, whose founder was sent to jail for 15 years Monday along with top aides to Mr. Kim and bank

presidents he had bribed.

The Hanchongryong statement expressed regret over the death of the officer, the first fatality of the recent violence. But it blamed authorities and defiantly vowed to continue its struggle to bring down the president.

"We ask that the murderous and corrupt Kim Young-Sam regime take full responsibility and resign," the statement said.

After the last round of leftist-inspired violence at Yonsei University in August last year, authorities arrested 151 leaders of the Hanchongryong, dealing a severe blow to the body that the government says takes orders from North Korea.

But it has rebounded to take centre stage in the current political crisis surrounding Mr. Kim's campaign spending, extracting full advantage from the president's weakness.

Aid worker, four refugees slain in eastern Congo

LONDON (AFP) — Four refugees and a local employee of the British humanitarian aid group Save the Children were killed in an attack in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) last week, the organisation said Tuesday.

The five were shot dead last Thursday in an attack west of the border city of Goma, attributed by local reports to troops of DRC President Laurent Kabila. Save the Children press officer Alero Harrison told AFP.

The Save the Children employee was accompanying a group of 11 Rwandan children to a U.N. refugee agency collection point at Karuba, 45 kilometres west of Goma, when the attack occurred.

Some 36 adult refugees had attached themselves to the Save the Children group, and three of them were killed in the attack, Mr. Harrison said.

The fourth refugee was a child that the Save the Children worker was carrying in his arms, she said.

The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has suspended its activities at Karuba since the incident, spokeswoman Pamela O'Toole said in Geneva Tuesday.

Work will not resume there until appropriate steps are taken to assure the security of humanitarian workers, she said.

Meanwhile, the DRC's justice minister Tuesday welcomed the discovery of 4.8 million Swiss francs (\$3.4 million) in assets held by former President Mobutu Sese, but said it was only the start.

"We say bravo, it's something, but we know there is much more where that came from and we have to suspect that it is not always in the hands' interests to reveal it," Justice Minister Celestin Lwanga told Reuters in Kinshasa.

The funds discovered by Swiss banks in accounts belonging to Mr. Mobutu and his family have been frozen in line with Berne's orders last month, Switzerland's Federal Banking Commission said in a statement.

When Mr. Mobutu was toppled by rebels last month, the Swiss government ordered all banks in Switzerland to report if they or their foreign subsidiaries were holding wealth for Mr. Mobutu, his family or their associates.

In a separate development, Rwandan Vice-President Paul Kagame said Monday that Rwanda would provide military assistance to the new Democratic Republic of Congo if asked to do so.

Rwanda's military strongman denied that Kigali's forces had been directly involved in the seven-month conflict that ended last month when Mr. Kabila overthrew Mr. Mobutu and changed the name of the country.

"I am not looking forward to that, but if we are called upon, if the government of Rwanda can assist in any way, within our limited resources and means, sure, we would be very helpful," Gen. Kagame said in an interview.

"We would come along to help, because we sympathise with that situation, and we want them to succeed."

"If European countries can give military assistance to African countries, why can't African countries give military assistance to other African countries?" he added.

Gen. Kagame put calls in Kinshasa for the withdrawal of "Rwandans" who arrived there with Mr. Kabila's forces down to "politicizing." He said those protesting against what they describe as Rwandan troops in the new Congo were not differentiating between Rwandans from Rwanda and Congolese.

"They are not trying even to say these are actual Rwandans from Rwanda who have come here. They are just calling everybody Rwandese including the people with Rwandan origin who are actually Congolese nationals," Gen. Kagame said.

Asked to respond to reports that Rwandan troops have been operating in the new Congo, he said that those of Rwandese origin — Banyamulenge, Banyamasasi and others from the former eastern Zaire — were "always confused" with Rwandan nationals.

"These people are not making any distinction and this is where the problem comes," he said.

Gen. Kagame spoke of the presence of many groups in the former eastern Zaire, including members of the former Rwandan army, of the former Zairean army and others. "That's bound to create complications," he said. Asked if he was ruling out the possibility that Rwandan troops were active in Congo, he said: "We have not been active."

"We did not hide our sympathies to the rebel alliance at that time when the conflict started... so we still say that for us we think something good has happened. We don't hide that. But that is different from any direct involvement," he said.

Burma military said freeing opposition detainees

RANGOON (R) — Burma's military has started releasing most members of Aung San Suu Kyi's opposition party who were detained late last month to stop a special party gathering, opposition sources said Tuesday.

"Most of the NLD members who were detained have been released but a few of them are still under government custody," a National League for Democracy (NLD) Party source, who asked not to be named, told Reuters.

He gave no further details. Senior National League for Democracy (NLD) officials said late last month that up to 316 party members, including 50 members of parliament, were being held by the ruling military junta to thwart a planned May 27-28 gathering at the home of Mr. Suu Kyi.

The charge was denied by the ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC).

The NLD gathering had been planned to mark the seventh anniversary of the party's 1990 election landslide win which was never recognised by the SLORC.

The gathering fizzled out as the SLORC refused to allow NLD members to meet at Mr. Suu Kyi's home, limiting the numbers to a small group of senior party officials.

The SLORC continues to maintain roadblocks near

Suu Kyi's home and the NLD party headquarters in Rangoon.

The reported release of opposition detainees follows a decision by Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) over the weekend in Malaysia to admit Burma as a new member in late July.

ASEAN groups Brunei, Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and

Elite troops take on Tigers in fresh Sri Lanka drive

COLOMBO (AFP) — Elite army commandos backed by helicopter gunships Tuesday launched a fresh attack against Tamil Tiger guerrillas in northern Sri Lanka amid long-range fighting elsewhere, officials said.

Hundreds of Special Forces (SF) soldiers moved northwards from the newly captured town of Nedunkerni on a search-and-destroy mission to dismantle bunkers of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), officials said.

They said the lightning assault was a limited operation and would help troops involved in a bigger offensive underway in the same area to open a key land route through rebel territory to the northern peninsula of Jaffna.

There were no immediate reports of casualties on either side, but officials said the Russian-built MI-24 ground attack helicopters were providing close air support to SF commandos.

The defence ministry in a statement said air force planes Tuesday bombed suspected Tiger positions as ground troops prepared to resume an advance on another flank into rebel-held territory.

The air force took "four identified targets" of the LTTE just north of the new army bunker lines at the newly taken town of Ommathai, a ministry spokesman said.

"The air force bombed the targets and we have also directed artillery at six other targets," the spokesman said, adding troops were consolidating in areas taken from the Tigers.

Troops also shot dead two Tiger guerrillas who infiltrated the village of Vellankulam and recovered two automatic assault rifles, the spokesman said.

The fighting is concentrated in jungle areas and there had been no reports of large scale civilian casualties. However the Tigers say a large number of civilians living in areas under their control are starving.

The military denies charges they have blocked food going into rebel areas and in a statement Tuesday said civilian authorities were distributing food and other essentials to Tamil civilians.

In separate fighting Monday the LTTE ambushed a group of policemen in the east of the country and killed nine, including an officer.

The Tiger attack in the east of the country is seen by defence analysts as a diversionary tactic to blunt a fresh army advance in the north.

The on-going bigger offensive codenamed "sure victory" which was launched on May 13 in the north was bogged down because of intense rebel resistance, officials said.

Military officials said there had been no advance in the past 10 days but troops were now equipped to undertake a fresh incursion after strengthening their defences in areas taken from the rebels.

The military lost some 120 men killed since launching the drive on May 13. The rebels were believed to have lost nearly 300 of their cadres according to military estimates but the Tigers have said they lost only 82 men and women.

The military action involving two divisions or 20,000 soldiers is aimed at opening a 75-kilometre road through Tiger areas to link the northern peninsula of Jaffna with the rest of the country.

Military: Nigerian troops control Sierra Leone airport

LAGOS (AFP) — Nigerian troops are in full control of the airport of Sierra Leone's capital Freetown, where they have launched an offensive against the new military junta, according to army sources here.

Press reports Tuesday quoted military sources as saying that Nigerian troops who form the bulk of the West African peacekeeping force ECOMOG took control of the airport Monday after a brief firefight with Sierra Leonean forces there.

The aim was to secure the lungi airport for possible reinforcements of the peacekeeping force, which Monday battled troops of the junta that ousted President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah on May 25.

Some 2,200 Nigerian soldiers were reported to be in Sierra Leone.

The new regime of Major Johnny Koroma has formed a de facto alliance with former rebels of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and both were reported Monday to have been involved in an assault on a seafront hotel guarded by Nigerian troops in Freetown.

Outnumbered and out of ammunition, the Nigerians were eventually able to evacuate hundreds of petrified foreign nationals from the Mammy Yoko Hotel after Red Cross officials negotiated a ceasefire.

A Nigerian naval vessel earlier Monday shelled Freetown targets as part of an apparent bid to force Maj. Koroma to restore power to the elected civilian government.

Much of the Nigerian press Tuesday claimed that the ECOMOG bid to oust the junta in Sierra Leone was backed by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), which began summit talks Monday in the Zimbabwean capital Harare.

"Flush out the rascals," the independent Vanguard newspaper wrote in a front-page editorial.

Chechen officials arrive in Moscow for economic talks

MOSCOW (AFP) — Chief Chechen peace negotiator Movladi Udugov arrived here Tuesday for talks with Russian officials aimed at nailing down agreements covering customs arrangements, banking and oil.

Mr. Udugov was heading a delegation of government officials who were due to meet Russian First Deputy Prime Minister Anatoly Chubais and Security Council Secretary Ivan Rybkin, ITAR-TASS news agency reported.

A peace treaty signed by Russian and Chechen separatist leaders on May 12 left the breakaway north

Caucasus republic's political status unresolved but paved the way for much needed economic aid from Moscow.

Both sides also signed a wide-ranging social and economic cooperation agreement, envisaging joint efforts to pay pensions and benefits to the people of Chechnya and compensation for war victims.

Mr. Udugov, the Chechen first deputy prime minister, told Interfax News Agency that the main problem to be discussed concerned a draft customs agreement, which was almost ready to be signed.

هناك حصة لكل

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Avoiding the Algerian model

TURKISH PRIME Minister Necmettin Erbakan's call for early elections to end the current standoff between his Islamic-led coalition government and the military sounds right, but the question is whether such a step can solve Turkey's political crisis. Erbakan's Welfare Party is counting on stronger-than-ever support in new elections due to the widespread discontent among the Turkish people with their state of affairs. Many of those who voted for Welfare in the last elections did so in protest against conditions brought about by other ruling parties be they economic, social or political.

Since the adoption of strong free market policies by the late President Turgut Ozal, Turkey and its people have witnessed major upheavals that often threatened the fabric of the society. Turks generally admit that corruption has crept into their midst on an unprecedented scale after values and standards became determined by financial and economic factors at the expense of all other human considerations. This led the Turks, who are mostly traditional and conservative, to rebel. Voting for the Welfare Party was by and large the form in which this rebellion, if it can be called that, took place.

It would be naive to conclude that the support for the Turkish Islamists is attributable only to the religious factor. The army in particular should be aware of this reality before they cast their lot in favour of other political trends. As long as the secular military, who have traditionally been the power brokers in the country ever since the establishment of the Turkish Republic at the hands of Mustafa Ataturk, continue to view the Islamists as a threat to progress and secularism, there will always be the risk of rejecting the results of the elections and consequently of democracy and political pluralism as a system of government. With the vast majority of the Turkish people upholding Islam as their faith, it will be hard to convince them, even by the mighty military, that Islam per se is a problem for them.

The case of Algeria is still vivid in our minds. The military there prevented an imminent victory by the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) in 1992 for fear that the Islamists would fundamentally change Algeria's way of life. The whole country went up in flames that continue to rage until this day. If the Turkish military does indeed follow in the footsteps of their counterparts in Algeria, the risk of sinking the whole nation into a quagmire, where a domestic armed conflict will erupt, becomes that much greater.

If the secularists in Turkey wish to contain the power of extremism in their midst, all they have to do is clean up their house. Anything short of this is bound to backfire and plunge the country into a bloody civil strife the likes of which Turkey has not seen for many years.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER for Al Arab Al Yawm said Tuesday that the Arabs rejoice over the positive developments in the Syrian-Iraqi relations and the reopening of the common border which has been closed for over 17 years. This development means ending part of the sufferings of the Iraqis who have been under siege and deprived of the basic necessities for life, and marks the start of a new chapter in inter-Arab relations and a new move by the Arabs to jointly confront the common challenges, said Taher Adwan. But while rejoicing over this development, one can only wonder why Jordanian-Iraqi relations are not strengthened and why the Baghdad-Amman highway is not congested with trucks carrying food and medicine and other goods to the Iraqi people, said the writer. He said that Jordan has offered the Iraqis a lifeline in the darkest hours of their life and has respected the U.N. resolutions, but paid a dear price for its national stand on the pan-Arab and international fronts. Why should Jordan comply strictly with the U.N. resolutions concerning ties with Iraq at a time when the Turkish, Iranian and Syrian borders are open for free trade, asked the writer. He said it seems that the United Nations is unjustly closing the door before Jordan, to open it for the other neighbours of Iraq.

A WRITER for Al Aswaq daily said that the disaster that befell the Arabs in the 1967 war is alive in the minds of the Arab people because it reminds them of Israel's occupation of lands belonging to three Arab countries and the whole of Palestine. In observing the June war anniversary, Rashid Hassan said that the Israeli victory over the Arab countries in the 1967 war dealt a devastating blow to the Arab Nation because it marked the beginning of the colonisation of Arab lands in Palestine and other Arab lands. But the writer said it is regrettable to see the Arabs in total disarray 30 years after the 1967 war and the great disaster that befell them with the loss of their lands. It is also regrettable to see that the Arabs are unable to reach common ground over joint action to regain their lost property, said the writer. But he said the Arab masses can never forget their lands and will always strive to regain their rightful property, no matter how long the occupation will last.

Banning land mines — an initiative that comes from small countries, not great powers

By Gwynne Dyer

"WE HAVE a straightforward choice," said Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy last October. "We can... remove 100 million mines an arm and a leg at a time, or we can act." And the representatives of 50 countries, most of whose governments would never have sent them to Ottawa if they had known Axworthy would go that far, erupted into a standing ovation.

The Ottawa conference on banning land-mines was a departure from the traditional diplomatic way of doing things. Axworthy just invited any country that was interested to show up — and when it became clear, in the words of Canadian diplomat Ralph Lysyshyn, who chaired the meeting, "that there was an impatience to get going by an awful lot of participants," Axworthy broke the rules.

In his closing speech to the conference, unilaterally and with no advance warning, he proposed a deadline: a global ban on the production, sale, transfer or use of anti-personnel mines to be signed at a follow-on conference in Ottawa this December, and to go into effect only two years later.

What a contrast with the opening in Geneva on May 14 of this year's first session of the Conference on Disarmament, a vener-

able U.N.-sponsored body that has been talking about disarmament since the late Pleistocene. "Things are still ambiguous," said Chinese ambassador Sha Zukang, "but there are developments on mines."

What developments? Well, American representative John Holm, director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, thought Geneva should start talking about a global ban on anti-personnel mines, but there were problems. The Geneva process works by consensus, and some countries are still not keen on banning them.

Others offer a short list of the hold-outs: South Korea, Turkey, Mexico, Pakistan, Russia and China. And they point out that, apart from Russia and China, all these countries are closely associated with the United States.

So will the U.S. join the treaty that emerges from the Ottawa meeting in December? Holm says no: "The indications are that the process in Ottawa will produce a treaty... that is accepted by like-minded countries, but does not include a number of countries that are critically important for this treaty to be truly global."

In plainer language than Mr. Holm is allowed to use, the U.S. will not join a ban on anti-personnel mines until Russia and China do too. Why not?

Mainly because treaties have to be ratified by the U.S. Senate, which is so jealous of U.S. prerogatives that it would reject a treaty banning spears unless there were strict provisions for disarming the highland tribes of Papua New Guinea.

So the dance of the dinosaurs goes on in Geneva — but elsewhere, the "Ottawa process" gathers steam. Less than two years ago, only 14 countries favoured a total ban on anti-personnel mines. Now 56 countries have announced that they will stop using them, and 111 countries came to Vienna in February for an interim meeting paving the way for the Ottawa conference in December.

The momentum is becoming unstoppable — and it is a striking demonstration of the power of world public opinion, for what drives the whole process is shame: shame that we should still be making, selling or using such vicious, pointless weapons.

There are an estimated 110 million anti-personnel mines in 64 countries, left over from wars that have been over for as much as a decade. Every year another 2 million are laid — and every year around 25,000 people, mostly civilians, are killed or maimed by them. Yet they have virtually no military usefulness.

There has never been a

battle or a campaign whose outcome was seriously influenced by anti-personnel mines. Like booby-traps, they raise the general level of tension and misery in war, but the casualties they produce are of practically no military (as opposed to human) significance.

Anti-tank mines are different. Tanks are decisive weapons of war, and mines are one of the main ways of stopping them — which is why nobody is proposing to ban anti-tank mines. But even high-ranking American officers like General David Jones, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and General Norman Schwartzkopf, U.S. commander in the Gulf war, agree that a ban on anti-personnel mines would be "not only humane, but also militarily responsible."

It is particularly remarkable that the United States government should be so reluctant to ban anti-personnel mines, for they are primarily the weapons of the weaker side militarily, and many times more American soldiers have been killed by them than saved by them. What drives American policy, in both the White House and the Senate, is mainly the abstract notion that the United States is a great power, and should not move faster than the other great powers in any area of disarmament.

So nothing much will happen at Geneva; and in Ottawa, in December, a large majority of the world's countries will sign a treaty banning anti-personnel mines. Is this, as U.S. diplomats insinuate, a naive and largely meaningless exercise indulged in by lesser countries with lesser responsibilities?

Not at all. It marks the beginning of the end for anti-personnel mines, for once the treaty is in place, the pressure of world public opinion will really start to weigh upon those who refuse to participate.

The Russians may actually cave in and sign even before the United States, but it will surely follow in a matter of a few years. China may be a harder nut to crack, but if all the countries in the world that it sells mines to have signed the treaty, then its recalcitrance is of little practical importance.

This is good news, even beyond the value of the actual ban on anti-personnel mines, for it shows the world working in a different way. The original initiative came not from governments, but from non-governmental organisations that had to deal with the mine victims. The treaty was pushed not by the great powers, but by smaller countries that do not share their obsessions. And in the end, the great powers will come along too.

After the scoop years, the news business is a different game

By Richard Harwood

WASHINGTON — Those of us of a certain age had the privilege and good luck to come into journalism in an era of perpetual crisis. It began with a world depression and a world war and ended roughly 45 years later with the collapse of communism and better dreams than the long nightmare of nuclear destruction.

It was a brutal time for humanity. But for "news" it was a golden age: long wars, short wars and pseudo wars, genocidal madness abroad and domestic inquisitions at home, social revolutions and domestic upheavals, assassinations, near assassinations, the Nixon disgrace, trips to the moon, missile silos in the Great Plains, hostages in Iran, chaos in the Middle East, disillusion, disintegration and ideological death in the Soviet empire.

These great events shaped the attitudes of journalists and the pictures of the world we carried around in our heads. They determined the organisational structure of newsrooms, "internationalised" their value systems, created a demand for specialists and a better-educated labour force.

Hardly a day passed without a "great story." Planning the front page was an uncomplicated exercise: the press had a clear agenda defined by "news" that was granite hard and universally relevant.

It has become necessary in this more placid era to create new agendas and missions that struggle to define. News priorities are less obvious. Our audiences have new and more personal agendas, and many alternative sources of information and entertainment.

Great publicly owned corporations have largely replaced the family entrepreneurs who for so many years dominated the news business. Pulitzer, Chandlers, Grahams and Sulzbergers are still prominent in media affairs, but they are overshadowed in financial terms and in marketing objectives by new titans whose interest in "the news" is incidental at best.

General Electric, Westinghouse, Disney and an Australian conglomerate owned by Rupert Murdoch own the broadcasting networks. An oligarchy of chains owns most of the newspapers and magazines. Wall Street

underwrites the mergers and technology of the industry and exerts great influence dictated by the interests of investors and shareholders in maximising profits and efficiencies.

Social changes and historic inevitabilities have altered the character, attitudes and values of the newsroom labour force. Editors, columnists, reporters and publishers in the era of perpetual crisis — most of them white males who were themselves actors in the wars and political upheavals of that time — have gone into retirement or died off, leaving the stage to younger generations moulded by other experiences.

Women, minorities and specialists of a different kind — economic and business analysts and technological wizards, for example — are in great demand. Like the American people and the political class, obsessed for so many decades with issues of national security and survival, the press has "turned inward."

One of the oddities of this transition has been the re-invention of a "news" menu that bears similarities to the menu of the 1930s. Crime is now a central ingredient of the news report and entertainment programming, especially in broadcasting. Cops-and-robbers shows, both fiction and "faction," dominate the news bulletins, many of the prime-time hours on television and often the front pages of the "quality" press.

Echoes of the "class warfare" of the '30s are increasingly present in the news. FDR's enemies, the "malefactors of great wealth," are in modern dress the overpaid CEOs who meet bottom-line goals through downsizing strategies that have thrown into the street millions of white- and blue-collar workers. Politicians and the media alike stress the plight of the middle class.

Inequities in income distribution, job insecurity and the condition of the poor and disadvantaged are common themes in the press, themes often rendered in the "sob sister" genre invented by Hearst and Pulitzer early in this century.

But in contrast to the past, the protagonists and "victims of the system" no longer read much about themselves. The audience for newspapers and magazines increasingly is upscale and elitist as the pro-

letariat turns to television for soap opera fantasies and domestic comedies featuring singles and sex.

The business aspects of journalism have become a major concern of editors. An academic critic, Jay Rosen, asserts: "What has happened is that the practical demands, the production demands, have come to rule the intellectual life of the newsroom. We're talking about a system where nobody is reading, nobody is experimenting, nobody is lifted out of the routine."

The editor of the American Journalism Review, Rem Reider, writes: "Let's face it: The time when newspapers could really break much news is past... In a world of 24-hour cable news and instantly updatable Web sites, it seems almost quaint to consider breaking news a major part of a newspaper's raison d'être." Our new task is to provide "analysis, context and depth" to events of the day.

Leonard Downie, executive editor of The Washington Post, described in a communication to the American Society of Newspaper Editors the myriad responsibilities of contemporary editors in this new age of news:

"How to find, hire and manage the best people. How to increase and utilise real diversity in our newsrooms. How to increase the depth, authority and relevance of our reporting, the power and readability of our writing, the storytelling impact of our photography and graphics."

"How to cooperate with circulation and advertising departments on new features and sections while maintaining editorial integrity. How to evaluate and cope with industry fads like public journalism and new-age newsroom reorganisations. How to integrate the printed newspaper with Internet sites. How to decide tough ethical questions and handle legal threats. How to enable our staffs and ourselves to enjoy our unique profession."

It is a heavy load for a business that once described itself as a "game" in which the "scoop" and the "hard news" handed to us for so many years by irrational forces of history set the agenda and were the central reasons for going to work in the morning.

The Washington Post

LETTERS

Photo attitude

To the Editor:

THE ARTICLE "Favourite Indian dedicates himself to stamping out child exploitation" (Jordan Times, May 25, 1997) was accompanied by a photograph of a Pakistani child holding a banner regarding child labour in Pakistani sports goods industry. The picture was entirely out of place as the article pertained to child labour exploitation in India and not in Pakistan. The wrong picture has hurt Pakistani sensitivities as it was seen as a reflection of an indifferent attitude towards Pakistan.

As regards the question of child labour in Pakistan, like many other developing countries, we are also plagued by the menace. The government of Pakistan has taken measures to enact legislation banning child labour in Pakistan and we are undertaking strict implementation of the law, especially in the sports goods industry, which has resorted to child labour frequently. However, we do not have a system of "child servitude" as exists in neighbouring India.

Third, like India, we have a strong human rights and anti-child labour lobby which is doing as much as it can to deal with this important social problem.

Ali Sarwar Naqvi,
Ambassador,
Embassy of Pakistan,
Amman.

Help the defenceless

To the Editor:

I WILL keep writing about children and women until everyone realises the severity of the conditions many of our children live in.

Rana Hussein wrote about a child who was put on fire by his own father. This is outrageous, unbelievable, incomprehensible. This inhuman person must be persecuted and punished the way he deserves. Such a person should not be in charge of bringing up people and should not be part of our society. He should be locked up in a cell for a long time.

Sadly, in most such cases, the family of the child and the criminal will not press any charges. As Bob Robertson wrote in the same edition: "How could they hold their head up in front of their neighbours and relatives if they did." This is the case with almost all crimes against children and women. The child or woman will be blamed for not following the orders of the head of the family, for dishonouring the family, etc.... Some criminals will be even praised by the society for doing the right thing. What is righteous in killing a defenceless human being? No crime justifies that.

I call upon all children and women advocates to protect abused children and women. I urge them to help convince these victims to press charges against their abusers. I urge paediatricians to report such cases to the authorities, and the lawyers to volunteer on behalf of these victims.

Jordanians are good and kind and will not abandon their loved ones.

Osama K. Al Shaykh,
osamak1@eecs.berkeley.edu

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any issue they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld upon request but only under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing and abridging.



Thirteen elephants for 13 children

By Ali Kassay

ONE OF the most interesting pursuits for the amateur sociologist is to observe the behaviour of a community as it passes through a state of change. Take, for instance, Jordanian society when our country chanced to experience a bubble of prosperity in the seventies and eighties before it returned nearer its proper economic size.

In the course of those twenty heady years Jordanian society changed from an austere community that emphasised education and hard work as the means for self-improvement to one that upheld a single social value: conspicuous consumption. Nowhere is this more obvious than at Jordanian weddings, as I had the chance to remark a couple of years ago. These affairs have developed into major extravaganzas where Verdi competes with Amr Diab to deafen guests and uninvited neighbours alike, and where the eyes flit incredulously between professional belly dancers, laser shows, flights of doves and, on one occasion, an elephant.

Another institution where the nouveau riches found expression was school-leaving ceremonies. Traditionally, these were sober affairs where the school principal or an invited dignitary gave a speech extolling some virtue before a fidgety and inattentive audience, before handing the pupils their certificates and despatching them into the big world beyond. Gradually, the talk of virtue rang increasingly hollow, as Jordanians came to recognise this quality as the path to insignificance, if not ruin. The main attraction at the ceremony became the outfit of pupils, which sometimes cost as much as a motor car. Later, competition for first place moved to the domain of the sports cars given to graduating children, which they would parade in Amman, horns blaring and with assorted youth dangling from all sides. This practice, which coincides this year with the Jordanian week for the prevention of road accidents, surprisingly enough does not seem to receive a mention in the public awareness campaign.

This year, however, a new height has been reached in the Jordanians' competition to out-squander. It appears that, in a school which otherwise seeks to instil a healthy and responsible civic sense in its pupils, a group of thirteen families ganged up and decided to hijack the occasion. They conspired in secret from the school's faculty and other parents of graduates, then they flung upon the innocent and unsuspecting an invitation to a lavish diversissement to which their own friends and relations were invited by the hundreds, but from which the parents of other graduating children were barred. Who knows — perhaps we may soon see thirteen elephants for thirteen children.

Of course one could say that people have the right to invite or exclude whom they want to and from a private party. The problem here is that an event which should have been a communal festivity was insidiously converted into an exclusive affair, which is unhealthy regardless of the criteria for exclusion. Unfortunately, this is not an isolated incident in our society. It has become increasingly common for small cliques to hijack more and more of the public domain and convert it into a closed shop. We can only hope that some exogenous influence succeeds in making our children a good deal more mature than their parents.

Nidal dies as a result of burns

Father being questioned by criminal prosecutor

By Rana Hussein
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Officials Tuesday said that the 11-year-old child, who was allegedly set ablaze by his father in Jabal Nafid on Saturday, died late Monday in hospital.

The child, Nidal Atef Gbandour, was admitted to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at Al Bashir Hospital, with 80 per cent burns to his body, and doctors then said his chances of survival were slim.

His 31-year-old father, Atef, was apprehended by authorities shortly after Nidal was admitted to the hospital.

Initial reports have indicated that Nidal was studying with his two brothers in the front yard of their house while their father slept.

The children started screaming, and the noise awakened their father who became upset, went outside and told them to tear up their books, officials have said.

Nidal refused to tear up his books, so his father took him to the bathroom, poured kerosene and set him on fire.

Judicial sources told the

Jordan Times Tuesday that the father is being questioned by the criminal prosecutor.

Meanwhile, Irbid police Tuesday announced the arrest of a 28-year-old man in connection with the murder of another man in Huwara village.

According to a report that was released by the Jordan News Agency (Petra) the suspect, identified only as A.M., confessed to striking his friend, identified only as K.M., 22, with an axe for disputes.

The report gave no further details other than that police found the murder weapon 150 metres away from the scene of crime.

In Ajloun, police were investigating the death of an 18-year-old man, who was found strangled in Halawah village.

Ala' Radi Abdul Kader was found dead by officials at around 6:30 a.m., beside an olive tree in a deserted area with a plastic rope tied around his neck.

An official source told the Jordan Times that initial investigations point to a suicide.

Police said they were investigating the incident.

Barak sweeps Labour...

(Continued from page 12)

after 35 years in uniform — Mr. Barak played heavily on his reputation as the most decorated soldier in Israeli history.

Stressing the need to guarantee Israel's security in all peace negotiations with the Palestinians and Arab states, Mr. Barak sought to present himself as the natural successor to slain former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

Leah Rabin revealed Tuesday that she voted to make Mr. Barak leader of the party once headed by her husband, who was assassinated by a Jewish extremist in November 1995.

"Barak will continue in the way of Rabin," she told Israel Radio. "I see a lot of good characteristics in him."

But throughout the party election campaign, Mr.

Barak kept his policy positions deliberately vague.

Last month he only reluctantly went along with a change to the Labour Party platform expressing conditional support for the creation of a Palestinian state as the final outcome of the Oslo peace process launched by Rabin and Mr. Peres.

Mr. Barak had in the past strongly opposed Palestinian statehood and in September 1995 abstained in a cabinet vote on the interim peace accord signed by Mr. Peres which extended Arab autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Echoing what has now become government policy under Mr. Netanyahu, Mr. Barak charged at the time that the Oslo accords did not provide acceptable security guarantees for Israelis and Jewish settlers in the occupied territories.

Israel protests...

(Continued from page 1)

in the letter, which was made public by his office.

Mr. Naveh said threatening Palestinian statements aimed at dissuading land sales to Jews "represent a flagrant violation of both the spirit and the letter" of signed peace agreements.

They "stand in blatant contradiction to the principles of peace, trust and cooperation which underlie the entire peace process," he said.

The letter "emphatically" demanded that the PNA "immediately and effectively cease all such acts of incitement."

"We call upon you to take

all appropriate steps against anyone involved in the perpetration of such hostile acts," it said.

But the letter stopped short of making an end to the killings a precondition for resuming peace negotiations which were suspended by the Palestinians nearly three months ago in protest at the building of a settlement in east Jerusalem.

"It is in the mutual interest of both parties to contribute to calming the current situation. We should accordingly invest all our efforts in the avoidance of any acts that may result in the deterioration of the already sensitive situation," Mr. Naveh said.

EU envoy upbeat...

(Continued from page 1)

nos, without elaborating on the reasons for his optimism.

Israel has repeatedly rejected Palestinian demands that it freeze all construction of Jewish settlements in occupied Arab areas as a condition for resuming peace negotiations which were broken off when construction at Jebel Abu Ghneim began in mid-March.

Mr. Erakat was less upbeat than the EU diplomat, saying, "It is too early to judge" if the EU and

Egyptian mediation efforts will bear fruit.

"Our hope is for a coordinated initiative between Europe and the Egyptians aimed at removing the causes which led to the current crisis," he said, adding, "We hope these envoys will produce some results."

Before meeting later in the day with Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy, Mr. Moratinos criticised the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) for its hand in the recent murders of three Palestinians allegedly involved in land sales to Jews.

Algiers shuts schools...

(Continued from page 12)

sented the polls as a key step towards resolving the nation's five-year-old conflict.

Thursday's polls will be the first parliamentary elections in the oil-and-gas-producing country since the military-backed authorities in January 1992 scrapped a poll which the radical Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was poised to win.

Shortly afterwards, the country plunged into civil strife in which an estimated 60,000 people have died.

FIS has been banned since and a new constitution now bans using Islam as a tool to seek public office.

More than 7,000 candidates from 39 parties, and hundreds of independents, are vying for the 380-seat national assembly. FIS leaders in exile have called for a boycott.

Parties seen as front-runners include the

national democratic rally, grouping supporters of President Liamine Zeroual, and the Islamist-leaning movement of a peaceful society, led by Mahfoud Nahnah.

They wound up their campaigns Monday evening ahead of a two-day mandatory pause for reflection before the vote.

At a final rally in Algiers, anti-Islamist hawk Saadi, leader of the rally for democracy and culture, told supporters:

"The regime who wasted the trust of the National Liberation war and failed to develop the country when a barrel of oil was worth \$40 cannot pull the country out of its political and economic problems," Mr. Saadi said. "Change is the solution."

In a verbal attack on Islamists, Mr. Saadi said: "Those who distribute death cannot improve the lives of the people."

Israel to force its...

(Continued from page 1)

hem and Ramallah, where the Jordanian textbooks have been printed in the past and which have provided exam observers in the past, he told AFP.

Mr. Elias said no West Bank observers would be allowed at this year's exams, which are due to begin next week.

"This was an ad hoc system, a sort of mini-autonomy for the Palestinians, which has gone on for years and has satisfied everyone. No Israeli government, left or right, has ever tried to disturb it," Mr. Seideman said. "Now Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert is making an issue of it as part of his continuing effort to remove any Palestinian influence in the city and strengthen Israeli control," he said.

"Israel tried the same thing in 1967 right after occupying the city, but Palestinian teachers went on strike and the protests were so large it had to back off. I doubt they will have any more luck with it now," he said.

Israel claims that PNA involvement in any aspect of Arab east Jerusalem life violates the Oslo peace accords. Those agreements limit self-rule government to administering parts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, while Palestinian claims "over" east Jerusalem were set aside to be dealt with in future negotiations.

Israel's crackdown on the school curriculum coincides with an escalating crisis in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process caused by the government's policy of expanding the Jewish presence in east Jerusalem and other occupied areas where Palestinians hope to create an independent state.

Crown Prince underlines need to develop...

(Continued from page 1)

any effective dialogue between Muslims and Christians will have to address the conflicts and divisions among followers of the two religions in Muslim and Christian countries.

Prince Hassan, who has been working extensively against the spread of Islamophobia in the West, urged an end to the misconceptions that are being promoted against Islam.

The Crown Prince called for ending the injustice to which Muslim residents of Western countries are being subjected, through judging them by the acts of a minority of Muslims who do not represent Islam or its true tolerant and peaceful nature.

While many Muslim countries are minimising contact with their nationals who have emigrated to North America, Europe or other countries, Prince Hassan said, the majority of Western

states consider their Muslim residents or nationals directly related to their original homelands and responsible for their acts.

It is painful to see that Muslim residents and nationals of Western states are often condemned and discriminated against for the actions of a few extremists, said Prince Hassan.

The seminar is organised by the Royal Academy for Islamic Civilisation

Research (Al al Bayt Foundation), in cooperation with the Orthodox Centre of Chambes in Switzerland at the initiative of Prince Hassan and Metropolitan Damaskinos of Switzerland.

Addressing the opening session, President of Al al Bayt Foundation Nassereddin Al Assad said the Academy has organised 17 seminars on Islamic-Christian dialogue in cooperation with four churches and international Christian organisations.

Mr. Assad said "we have gone beyond the stage of mere dialogue and interaction with each others to the stage where we should think of joint projects and programmes."

The Patriarch of Constantinople stressed the need for cooperation and called for finding common grounds for meetings, understanding and tolerance. He noted that both Islam and Christianity have many things in common that can be capitalised upon to advance better understanding and cooperation.

The president of the Orthodox Centre of Chambes in Switzerland stressed the need for overcoming obstacles and for peaceful coexistence at the national, regional and international levels.

Taking part in the MCC are more than 40 Muslim and Christian scholars from Arab and European countries.

Government plan divides bureaucrats

(Continued from page 1)

Dr. Majali.

Referring to "manual labour shame" in Jordanian society Dr. Majali said "Jordanians have been shunning away manual work because of current social practices making Jordan a country that has the highest number of government employees in relation to the size of its population... we bypassed Europe long ago on this issue and have now bypassed America."

He said that this dilemma of shame associated with manual labour had been addressed thoroughly throughout the media, but still needed practical measures to overcome it.

Dr. Majali pointed out that Jordan had up to 300,000 guest workers in varying sectors costing the national treasury JD500 million per annum.

"This amount of money could play a significant role in supporting the national eco-

my or could save the treasury what will allow it to improve income levels of Jordanians," he said.

"The government is studying the foundation of a free zone in Aqaba which is to be followed by Irbid and other governorates as well as the establishment of an industrial city," Dr. Majali said.

Yet the prime minister said "we have to admit that despite the difficulties in executing the programme, we have made many achievements which will reflect positively on the national economy."

On the issue of foreign investment, Dr. Majali said that the government is doing all it can to attract Arab and foreign capital to invest in Jordanian projects.

The prime minister explained that foreign capital seeks a stable and secure climate which are available in Jordan following the conclusion of the Jordan-Israel peace

process.

"We have laid down legislation designed to encourage investments but we believe that what has been achieved in this respect is not enough and we are exerting more efforts to remove all barriers," noted Dr. Majali.

Referring to the peace process he said that peace has become a strategic option for Jordan.

"But the deadline in the peace process on the Israeli-Syrian and Israeli-Palestinian tracks is adversely affecting us to a great extent and slowing down the transfer of capital for investment in Jordan," Dr. Majali said. Concerning the Turkish invasion in Iraq he said the disarray in Arab ranks has given Turkey an excuse to invade northern Iraq. While condemning the invasion, he said, Jordan calls for diplomatic efforts to settle the issue.

China defends its sales...

(Continued from page 12)

informed Congress that the Chinese government had sold cruise missiles to Iran, enhancing that country's ability to disrupt Gulf shipping and challenge U.S. forces in the region.

It also suggested that some Republican congressmen would use the confirmation as fresh ammunition to oppose renewal of China's Most Favoured Nation

(MFN) trading status.

Mr. Cui said efforts to block MFN renewal by linking it to other issues were doomed to failure.

"Some people in the United States often link MFN with unrelated things but in the end it has always been proved to be a failure," Mr. Cui said.

"If there's a small group of people in the United States who want this time to link MFN with unrelated issues,

it could only reach the same result," he said.

MFN gives China the normal trade status the United States accords all but six nations: Afghanistan, Cuba, Laos, North Korea, Serbia and Vietnam. Iran, Iraq and Libya technically enjoy MFN status but are subject to separate trade embargoes.

Last month, U.S. President Bill Clinton announced a plan to renew MFN for China for another year despite disputes with Beijing on many issues, notably human rights.

Jury finds Gulf war veteran...

(Continued from page 12)

lies "has been an inspiration to all Americans."

"This is a very important and long overdue day for the survivors and families of those who died in Oklahoma City," he said.

In Oklahoma City, Governor Frank Keating welcomed "a wonderful victory for these wonderful families," adding he wanted the death penalty for McVeigh.

An overwhelming majority of the victims' family members agreed.

"I want him put to death," said Charles Tornlin. Otherwise, "he'd be ... in prison, eating, drinking, watching television, reading books? My son is dead."

The prosecution portrayed the gun enthusiast and self-described patriot with close ties to right-wing militia groups as a man driven by hatred for the federal government, which he blamed for the deaths of 81 Branch Davidian cult members killed in a standoff with federal law agents in Waco, following a 51-day siege.

Two years to the day after the Waco siege, McVeigh sought vengeance by setting off the truck bomb in broad daylight in the hope of sparking a popular anti-government uprising.

Lead defence attorney Stephen Jones maintained the blast was set by an unknown man who was

blown up along with his victims.

Jurors were sequestered Friday and reached their verdict on the fourth day of deliberations.

"It seemed to take an eternity to me," said Jannie Coverdale, whose two grandchildren died in the blast.

McVeigh, who declined to take the witness stand, is expected to face a second trial later this year in Oklahoma City for the murder of 160 people, including 19 children. An alleged accomplice, Terry Nichols, is also to be tried.

McVeigh was arrested one hour, 15 minutes after the blast for driving a car without registration plates.

Prosecutors traced McVeigh's movements, his motive and his seven months of preparations during 19 days of testimony in which they called 137 witnesses, including his sister Jennifer and former best friend Michael Fortier.

The defence called 25 witnesses in three days and focused on the fact that no witness placed McVeigh in Oklahoma City on the day of the bombing.

Mr. Jones declined to comment on the verdict but said: "We have visited with Mr. McVeigh, we will be working with him tonight and tomorrow for the preparation of the second stage on Wednesday."

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Study unveils challenges, shows strong and weak areas in Jordan's economy

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Despite the improvement in Jordan's foreign trade and the decrease of the deficit in the balance of payment, the Kingdom faces challenges that might hamper its performance in the coming years, a study by the Amman Chamber of Industry has indicated.

The study, made available to the Jordan Times, showed the challenges arising from the economic globalisation that requires decreasing the protection for domestic industries and increasing foreign competition. The globalisation will be felt when Jordan joins the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and enters into partnership with the European Union in addition to the current economic restructuring programme as all of these steps call for lowering tariffs and facilitating the flow of foreign goods to the Jordanian market.

Despite these challenges, the study points to positive figures in the Kingdom's economy such as the gradual increase in the growth

rate, which reached 5.2 per cent in 1996, and the 35 per cent rise in the Kingdom's foreign reserves at the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) by the end of 1996 compared with the 1995 figures.

The study shows that after several years of economic "recession" (1988-1991), the Jordanian economy registered a 16 per cent growth in 1992 that was followed by growth at a rate of six per cent in the subsequent four years.

It listed among the positive signals in 1996 the Kingdom's ability to preserve the value of the national currency, the drop in the budget deficit to 4.6 per cent in relation to the gross domestic product (GDP) and the increase in domestic revenues to 30.4 per cent in relation to the GDP.

The study said that exports increased annually at between six per cent and 26 per cent while imports increased by 11 to 29 per cent. The result, the study added, was the increase in exports by 74 per cent between 1991-1996 compared to a 78 per cent rise in imports.

Although the deficit in the

balance of trade increased by 87 per cent in the same period, its percentage to the GDP dropped from 33 per cent in 1991 to 29.2 per cent in 1995 but surged again in 1996 to 34 per cent because of an increase in the Kingdom's imports which required a review of the economic policies that caused the rise at that time, the study said.

The three-page report indicated that the domestic industry has accounted for 22 per cent of the GDP and employed 150,000 workers in about 24,000 factories. In 1996, the industry accounted for about 90 per cent of the Kingdom's total exports which reached nearly 100 foreign markets.

While the value of potash, phosphate and other exports from mining and quarrying industries reached JD252 million in 1996, compared with JD220 million in 1991, exports from other manufacturing industries doubled from JD316 million in 1991 to JD695 million in 1995 but declined slightly to JD642 million in 1996. In other words, the (manufacturing) exports accounted for 52 per cent of the

total exports in 1991 but accounted for 62 per cent in 1996.

The study said the mining industry's share in the GDP decreased from 4.9 per cent in 1991 to 3.1 per cent in 1996 while the manufacturing share rose from 13.7 per cent to 16.2 per cent in 1996.

Regarding Jordan's foreign trade, the study showed that 45 per cent of the Kingdom's exports went to Arab countries compared with 23.3 per cent in imports from these countries. Imports from the European Union were 33 per cent, nine per cent were from the United States and 34 per cent from other countries.

The study said that there are worrying indicators such as the higher deficit in the balance of trade, rising unemployment and high foreign debt. The study stressed that the private sector and the government should coordinate their efforts to face the upcoming challenges, facilitate investment atmosphere in the Kingdom, support free trade with Arab countries and create joint ventures between Arab

Joint projects, cooperation strongly stressed at Jordanian-Bahraini seminar

By Ghaila Alul
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Officials Tuesday described trade relations between Jordan and Bahrain as far below aspirations and reiterated the need to improve the balance of trade between both countries.

"Our trade with Bahrain is far below our ambitions. We are looking to establish

joint ventures as well as explore new opportunities," Amman Chamber of Industry Chairman Khalidoun Abu Hassan told a joint Jordanian-Bahraini economic seminar which was held on the sidelines of a Bahraini trade exhibition in Jordan.

The volume of trade between Jordan and Bahrain last year reached JD34.4 million, JD14.1 million of

which were exports to Bahrain, while JD20.3 million were imports from the Arab Gulf country, said Haidar Murad, Chairman of the Federation of the Jordanian Chambers of Commerce.

"There is no doubt that we have a big opportunity to double these numbers. We hope that the Bahraini exhibition will result in the signing of trade and investment

deals between the private sectors in both countries," he added.

The seminar, which was opened by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, discussed the economic relations between Jordan and Bahrain as well as investment opportunities in both

(Continued on page 9)

ADVERTISING CALTEX ALKHALIJ - NEW IDENTITY UNITES TRADITION EXPERIENCE WITH A PROMISE OF QUALITY AND VALUE

After three years of research, Caltex has completed an extensive redefinition of its international branding and today presents a new corporate identity—an identity which reflects the company's core values of quality, professionalism and services. Along with the change in identity, Caltex is changing how it does business, focusing on building

value for customers and partners through preeminent service and speed of execution.

"The new identity underscores Caltex commitment to Quality, both in our products and how we do business, objectives recognised by our recently receiving the Dubai Quality Award," said Phil Garrison, General manager of Caltex AlKhalij,

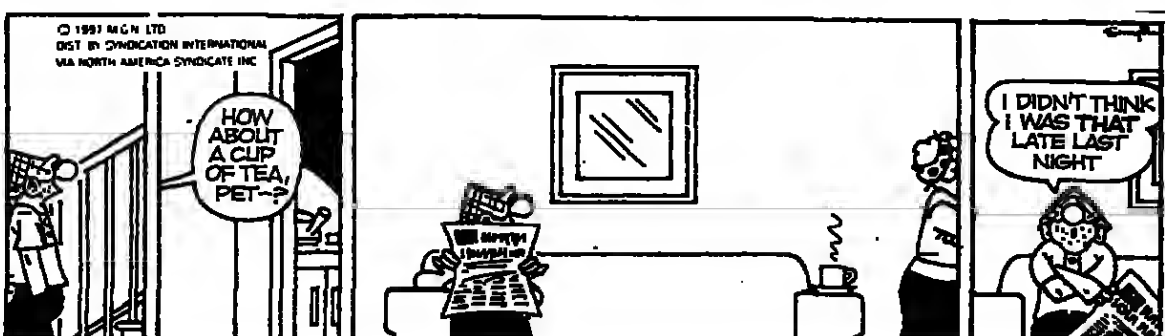
unveiling the new identity in Amman. Caltex AlKhalij is part of the Caltex group of companies, owned on a 50-50 basis by Chevron and Texaco. "As a joint venture itself, Caltex is sensitive to the needs of venture partners and is concentrating on being the partner of choice by bringing our reputation of reliability and innovation to new ventures," he added.

The familiar Caltex star has remained basically unchanged since 1936. In the new logo, the star is radically changed by incorporating a modernistic wedge on one arm. A new unique colour - Caltex Deep Ocean Green - is added to the traditional red and white. The Caltex is pulled out of the star and is set in a new typeface.

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n' Jeff



REUTERS • REUTERS •

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	1.7273	0.8117	1.4374	116.09	1.3734	1686.20	1.9424	5.8208	
DE Mark	0.5788		0.3538	0.3320	67.24	0.7948	981.88	3.3710	
GB Sterling	1.6348	2.8250		2.3492	189.32	2.2452	2776.68	3.1797	5.5288
CH Franc	0.6957	120.12	0.4251		80.76	0.8549	1102.13	135.17	4.0490
JP Yen	0.0088	1.4866	0.5281	1.2271		1.1018	14.60	167.20	5.0112
CA Dollar	0.7261	1.2327	0.4447	1.0282	1.18		1214.82	1.5862	4.1603
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0178	0.3600	0.0847	1463.70	0.8088		11.45	3.4286
NL Guilder	0.5145	68.24	0.3144	73.53	58.70	0.7062	872.30		2.9948
FR Franc	0.1718	0.2965	0.1049	24.6574	19.52	0.2357	33.36	33.3600	

Middle Eastern Currencies

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	0.7080	3.7503	0.3770	3.6398	0.3027	3.6729	1537.00	3.3885	
Jordan Dinar	1.4124		0.2970	0.5325	5.1410	0.4276	5.1777	2170.90	4.7874
GB Sterling	0.2668	0.1888		0.1005	0.97	0.8807	0.98	409.53	0.9038
Bahrain Dinar	2.65	1.8701	0.9483		0.86	0.8830	9.74	4077.14	3.9911
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1945	1.0304	1.0304		0.8832	1.01	422.28	0.9312
Kuwait Dinar	3.3035	2.3398	12.3891	1.2454	12.82		12.13	6077.47	0.9312
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1928	1.0211	1.0208	0.9910	0.8824		418.47	0.9328
Lebanese/1000	0.65	0.4808	2.4400	0.2453	2.3681	0.1969	2.3897		2.2052
Egyptian	0.2950	0.2089	1.1065	0.1112	1.0739	0.0893	1.0836	453.47	

Energy

Commodity	Price
Brent	18.30
WTI	20.70
Bonny	19.30
Dubai	18.85
UL Gas	208.00

Mid-East Currencies

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
SA Riyal	0.2668	0.4608	0.16311	0.36344	30.9818
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.47048	0.16634	0.39191	31.6348
KW Dinar	3.3035	5.70776	2.02061	4.75089	383.877
BH Dinar	0.3770	4.5285	1.52289	3.81388	308.166
CY Pound	1.9407	3.3804	1.1858	2.7873	225.10

Metal Prices

Commodity	Price
Gold (oz's)	343
Silver (oz's)	4.73
Platinum (oz's)	416
AL (3 Months)	1580
CU (3 Months)	2482
Zinc (3 Months)	1333
Lead (3 Months)	626
NI (3 Months)	7180

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)

Currency	1 Month	3 Months	6 Months	1 Year
USD	5.50	5.64	5.79	5.98
GBP	6.25	6.50	6.50	6.90
JPY	0.43	0.46	0.58	0.68
DEM	2.81	2.94	3.00	3.12
FRF	3.26	3.34	3.40	3.46
CHF	0.81	1.00	1.08	1.18
ITL	6.75	6.68	6.62	6.58

Main Equity Indices

Index	Value	Change	High	Low	Pr. Cls.
New York	DOW JONES	7320.51	30.91	0.42	7328.47
New York	S&P 500	848.89	2.53	0.3	849.52
London	FT-SE 100	4557.5	-5	-0.11	4565.5
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	20863.10	111.31	0.54	20672
Paris	CAC 40	2624.49	23.04	0.89	2635.37
Frankfurt	DAX	3628.74	20.12	0.56	3628.11

Energy

Commodity	Price
Coffee (c/lbs)	254.5
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1457
Sugar (\$/ton)	335.7
Wheat (\$/ton)	151
Soya (c/lbs)	23.89
Tea (\$/kg)	155
Barley (\$/bush)	0
Rice (\$/ton)	480

JOD Cross Rates

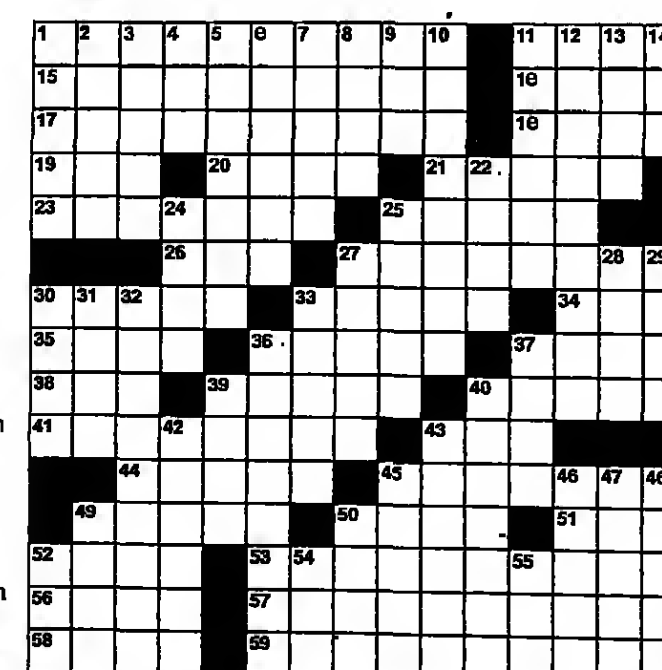
Currency	Buy	Sell
US Dollar	0.708	0.710
GB Sterling	1.1556	1.1614
DE Mark	0.4088	0.4108
CH Franc	0.4935	0.496
FR Franc	0.1212	0.1218
JP Yen	0.0767	0.0768
NL Guilder	0.3632	0.365
IT Lira	0.4151	0.4172

* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

THE Daily Crossword

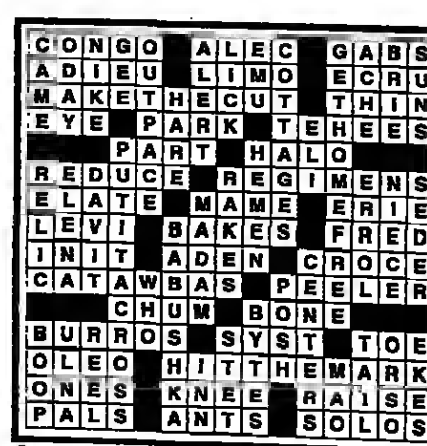
ACROSS

- Prehistoric monument
- Off yonder
- Some nuts
- Cleo's stream
- Add-ons
- Golf club
- Fat farm, e.g.
- Maneuverable, as a ship
- Ms. Lauder
- With ease
- Bergen's Mortimer
- Ones elected
- Card game akin to 21
- "Not with —, but..."
- Al and Tipper
- Kind
- Sole
- Manner of fiction
- Erato's sister
- West or Murray
- Retired Justice White
- Noisy outbursts
- Financial records
- Container
- treat
- Remainder
- Game of chance
- Japanese ship
- Khan
- Pro —
- Mediator, hopefully
- Cassini of fashion
- Ambience
- Foundation
- Usurers



by Alvin Becker

- Baseball number
- Gun to a hood
- Fragrances
- Character from "Peer Gynt"
- Emergency procedure
- vera
- Stimpy's pal
- Parts of mins.
- Eat out
- Food wrap
- Single-edged machetes
- "I cannot tell —"
- Some fight outcomes
- mater
- Certain airline
- Short stories
- Waist circumference
- Relating to swooning
- Miracle site
- Cigarette stub
- Move clumsily



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- Temporary electric failure
- Touch lovingly
- BLT word
- Kettledrum
- Office worker
- Circuit courts
- Tra —
- Family member
- Steel
- Ike's command
- Discovery word

HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY, JUNE 4, 1997

By Thomas S. Pierson
Astrologer, Carroll
Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You should not try to force your views on anyone today, avoid this, especially with people in positions of power. Don't allow yourself to become confused with any career activities which you are given without asking questions.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You should not neglect your daily duties today or other responsibilities in order to get involved in some recreation which is really not worthwhile. Later this evening will be good for meeting with close friends for good times.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You should concentrate on a personal matter today, and not allow a small business affair take up your time. Be loyal to your friends whom you respect and can be quite helpful towards your success in any career activities.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) If a disagreement develops today between a superior and a fellow business associate, you should not be afraid to stand behind your own opinions. Later this evening will be good for going out on the town with your mate.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Although you have many tasks to complete today, it may be a good idea to take some time to find the data you need to get through them more quickly. Later this evening will be good for consulting with knowledgeable people.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 21) Be very cautious where finances are concerned. Avoid expensive entertainments, fasteners, and you should not get involved in any risky ventures. This is a good time to go to a romantic location with your mate.

LIBRA: (September 22 to October 21) If you must meet today with a person who tends to act rather hastily, you should not meet in your home. An outside meeting would prevent any difficulties which you are trying to avoid as much as possible.

SCORPIO: (October 22 to November 21) Ignore the complaints of a discontented fellow associate today, and follow through with your plans just as you have arranged them. Later this evening will be a good time to consult with a bigwig with your career activities.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Forget unimportant practical affairs for a while today, and concentrate on improving a talent you possess which can help you to be more successful. This evening will be a good time to relax with your loved ones.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) This is not a good time to just sit around today and vegetate, as you could miss some great opportunities. Visit some good friends later this evening and have fun at recreational activities which you enjoy.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Put more enthusiasm and energy into your activities today, and you'll receive some fine benefits. Catch up on your correspondence later this evening which you have neglected and thereby gain the respect of a bigwig.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) If you get involved in a disagreement today between a good friend and a financial expert, you will more than likely end up being the loser. Later this evening will be a good time to stay at home with your loved ones.

Birthstone of June: Pearl — Moon Stone



Industrialists and businessmen (right photo) listen to Prime Minister Majali and other senior Jordanian and Bahraini officials (left photo) during a seminar held Tuesday at the Amman Chamber of Industry (Petra photo)

Commercial, industrial and financial ties seen cementing relations between Jordan, Bahrain

(Continued from page 8)

countries. Dr. Majali told the participants that the Kingdom is keen to create a suitable investment climate through the introduction of the amendment of economic laws as well as the establishment of industrial cities geared towards facilitating trade and export procedures.

Dr. Majali called on the Jordanian and Bahraini private sectors to work side by side in order to enhance economic relations through the establishment of joint ventures.

Alli Ben Yusuf Fakhr, chairman of the Bahraini Chamber of Industry and Trade stressed that the opportunities to increase trade exchange between Jordan and Bahrain are immense, noting that both countries could rely on each other's high quality industrial products rather than seeking foreign markets.

"We could benefit from the incentives provided by the investment laws in both our countries. These laws could expand the fields of investments and help in establishing joint economic projects," Mr. Fakhr said. Industry, Trade and Supply Minister Hani Mulki said that both countries have a good industrial experience. However, he added, this experience will be stronger if both sides decide to establish joint projects to benefit both countries or a third country or even at an international level.

Members of the Bahraini Chamber of Industry and Trade reviewed the incentives and the facilities that their country provides for investors.

Bahraini Chamber of Industry and Trade Vice President Hassan Mohamed Zein Al Abideen said Bahrain provides the basic infrastructure, services and required land as well as qualified labour force for investment projects.

He added that Bahrain is

a major financial centre which provides financing for various projects.

Projects set up in Bahrain enjoy total exemption of income tax as well as exemptions on imports of machinery and equipment, said Mr. Zein Al Abideen.

He added that companies with 100 per cent foreign equity can be set up in Bahrain.

At the end of the seminar, participants listed the following recommendations for boosting commercial ties between the two countries:

Facilitating the issuance of visas to businessmen, setting up free zones and facilitating transit services to serve neighbouring markets; organising exhibitions; gaining from the Bahraini experience in the financial sector and benefiting from the privileges and exemptions provided by the agreement signed between both countries in 1995.

Also Tuesday, Jordan and Bahrain signed an agreement of cooperation aimed at enhancing trade and economic relations as well as increasing trade exchange between the two countries.

Under the provisions of the agreement, both sides will keep businessmen and investors informed of economic and industrial capabilities in their respective countries as well as exchange studies and statistics related to economic and trade matters.

Both sides will also exchange information on their economic and investment laws as well as facilitate procedures and eliminate trade barriers which could hinder the establishment of any joint projects.

The two countries also agreed to encourage exports and the exchange of products and services.

The need to organise regular meetings between the members of the chambers of industry and trade in both countries was also emphasised in the agreement.

Bahrain to give on-the-spot visas to boost tourism, business

MANAMA (AFP) — Bahrain has decided to grant on-the-spot entry visas in a bid to attract more foreign tourists and businessmen to the Gulf island state.

Visitors from western Europe, Canada, New Zealand, Australia and Japan are now able to obtain a two-week visa at entry points into Bahrain, interior ministry

official Rashid Ben Khalifa Al Khalifa told local newspapers.

Previously they had to get their visas from Bahraini embassies abroad before travelling.

Sheikh Rashid said the relaxation of the regulations is part of a government drive to promote tourism and trade in Bahrain.

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic press

Jordan Investment and Tourism Transport reports JD0.9m loss

** THE JORDAN Investment and Tourism Transport Company has formulated a plan to tackle the reasons for the losses that were incurred in 1996 and to minimise these losses to the lowest possible level, board Chairman Raja'i Muasher told the general assembly.

Noting that the company posted a JD899,900 loss last year, Dr. Muasher revealed that consultations were initiated with other companies to set up a unified office to lease tourism buses.

He explained that the number of tourism buses for the three companies operating in the country is far in excess of the actual need of the market and that has sharpened competition between the companies to the extent of reducing prices to unacceptable levels.

"We realise that a unified leasing office may lead to the cancellation of the identity of companies compared to generating the reasonable income," the chairman indicated.

He pointed out that the company started towards the end of 1996 to lease its buses to official government institutions to be used for transporting participants and delegates during national conferences and seminars.

The buses were even leased to tourism offices to make touristic trips outside Jordan, such as Syria, Lebanon and Turkey and to transport pilgrims to Saudi Arabia.

"Such activities raise the level of operations in low tourism months," Dr. Muasher indicated.

He said that due to the increased demand by tourism offices for medium-size and small buses the company will be replacing some of its large buses with smaller ones in order to avoid leasing the bigger ones for the price of the small buses.

Dr. Muasher outlined the future plans by saying that the company will not be limiting its activities to internal tourism transport but will diversify operations to include actual participation in pilgrimage seasons and acquiring regular transport routes.

Another step will be in securing a large centre for maintenance, in agreement with known companies that own a number of vehicles, to conduct necessary repairs against a fee.

The company, which owns 80 different tourism buses, had a total of JD2.2 million in current assets at the end of 1996 compared to JD1.1 million at the end of 1995. Total assets stood at JD11 million (JD11.5 million in 1995). Total shareholders' equity increased from JD4.7 million in 1995 to JD6.1 million at the end of 1996.

At the start of its operations, the company resorted to borrowing to pay for the buses that were purchased. As such, the company paid JD660,000 interest last year in addition to JD262,000 in instalments that fell due in 1996 (Al Dustour + Al Ra'i).

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET														
HOUSING BANK CENTER - AMMAN - JORDAN														
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607175														
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR TUESDAY 03/06/1997														
PAST 12 MONTHS	COMPANY'S NAME	P/E	DIV.	NO. OF TRANS.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE					
269,000	213,000	ARAB BANK	11.8	1.57	6	280	71540	256.00	255.50	-0.50				
2,340	1,640	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	2	0.00	78	62195	138559	2.36	2.15	-0.21				
5,500	4,300	CALSO AMMAN BANK	11.4	3.73	1	1000	15500	5.50	5.50	-				
3,600	2,760	BANK OF JORDAN	6.6	0.00	2	600	1872	3.15	3.12	-0.03				
1,210	880	KID. EAST INV. BK.	62.4	0.00	8	1500	2281	2.98	2.95	-0.03				
2,480	2,120	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	8.5	7.38	5	1500	1581	2.30	2.29	-0.01				
5,300	4,250	THE HOUSING BK.	16.7	3.95	4	1500	7368	5.07	4.91	-0.16				
2,950	2,440	JCL. RUSTAT BANK	10.1	0.00	17	19350	53801	2.74	2.84	+0.10				
1,050	780	JOR. GULF BANK	4.8	8.78	3	33000	26410	0.81	0.80	-0.01				
4,050	3,480	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	15.3	3.18	3	1250	4713	1.79	3.77	+0.02				
3,000	1,160	UTIFON BK. SAV. INV.	9	0.00	3	1800	1755	1.16	1.20	+0.04				
3,800	3,000	JOR. INV. FIN. BANK	30.3	0.00	4	6400	2017	3.32	3.15	-0.07				
2,850	1,000	BEIT. AL-MAL (BEITWA)	8	11.81	2	250	318	1.34	1.27	-0.07				
1,440	1,000	RELAZED. INV. BK.	9	0.00	8	1250	1393	1.10	1.13	+0.03				
BANK SECTOR TOTALS										INDEX: 195.96	%CHG: -0.74	147	126854	321325
3,000	2,800	JORDAN INSURANCE	12.4	5.17	1	5000	14500	2.85	2.90	+0.05				
2,200	1,820	ARAB LIFE INSUR.	7.2	5.41	1	1000	1850	1.85	1.85	-				
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS										INDEX: 116.00	%CHG: +0.61	2	6000	16350
1,820	1,450	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	8.4	5.78	60	37578	65113	1.73	1.73	-				
2,650	2,090	SHIPPING LINES	15.1	5.00	4	5500	13790	2.48	2.60	+0.12				
1,400	930	KATL. PORTFOLIO	9	0.00	45	41080	54633	1.36	1.33	-0.03				
460	480	JORDAN INTL. TRAD.	9	0.00	1	1000	490	1.50	1.49	-0.01				
7,570	5,320	AD-OUTSTOR	20.5	4.19	1	100	505	5.32	5.05	-0.27				
3,720	2,900	ARAB INTL. INV. BDDC.	7.8	0.00	4	4000	13920	3.00	2.98	-0.02				
1,220	960	ADENA REFINCTION	7.2	0.00	1	1000	3723	1.00	1.05	+0.05				
2,230	1,630	UNIFIED CO.	8.1	6.47	6	2400	4080	1.72	1.70	-0.02				
1,060	680	UNION LAND DEV.	9	0.00	3	1250	813	0.67	0.65	-0.03				
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS										INDEX: 113.30	%CHG: +0.29	130	95676	154065
4,450	3,060	JOR. CHEMIST FACT.	28.1	2.63	70	54874	23079	4.29	4.28	-0.01				
4,140	3,710	JOR. PHOSPHATE MINES	11.0	3.51	8	10750	42364	6.00	3.98	-0.02				
7,050	4,950	ARAB POTASH CO.	15.7	2.96	1	6000	40500	7.00	6.75	-0.25				
10,190	8,720	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	9.6	8.93	13	1540	15391	10.02	9.98	-0.04				
3,260	1,650	INDUSTRIAL CORP. ACR.	0.00	0.00	2	310	430	1.95	1.91	-0.04				
4,000	3,040	ARAB PHARM. MANF.	10.7	5.17	29	10850	15800	3.93	3.87	-0.06				
2,070	1,390	JOR. PAPER INDUSTR.	17.6	0.00	2	350	355	1.41	1.42	+0.01				
1,680	1,130	KAFIA INDUSTRIES	10.0	0.00	2	100	120	1.20	1.20	-				
5,550	4,250	QAR ALDABA DV. INV.	12.8	4.79	17	5030	26326	5.35	5.32	-0.03				
4,350	3,040	ARAB ALUM. IND.	7.2	8.14	11	3460	7881	3.11	3.07	-0.04				
950	450	LYSTECOS & SOUTLEY	10.8	0.00	23	19650	10022	0.51	0.51	-				
1,310	1,020	ARAB PAPER CONV. TRD.	32.4	0.00	3	1200	1272	1.06	1.06	-0.02				
1,410	520	WATSON. IND.	9	0.00	2	3500	1910	0.55	0.54	-0.01				
1,460	700	INTERMED. PETRO. CHEM.	9	0.00	2	600	432	0.75	0.72	-0.03				
1,100	600	JOR. ROBINSON IND.	9	0.00	2	1500	930	0.64	0.62	-0.02				
2,080	1,130	UNIV. CHEM. IND.	18.3	4.95	15	600	3668	3.80	2.85	-0.95				
3,730	3,130	KATL. CABLE WIRE. MPAC	45.7	0.00	7	150	303	2.13	2.02	-0.11				
1,060	570	JOR. SOLPHO-CHEM	9	0.00	11	3800	2321	0.64	0.61	-0.03				
1,670	1,120	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	18.5	4.83	15	8145	11788	1.48	1.45	-0.03				
2,590	1,410	UNIV. MOON. IND.	2	1.18	3	1500	725	1.20	1.15	-0.05				
1,620	1,130	JOR. INDUS. RESOURCES	35.9	8.70	13	3191	3191	1.17	1.15	-0.02				
1,600	1,300	KATL. CHEMIST	24.0	4.73	15	31300	46320	1.48	1.48	-				
1,230	840	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	16.1	0.00	47	45100	39577	0.89	0.88	-0.01				
2,090	1,510	EL -ZAY READY WEAR	55.3	0.00	9	4300	6721	1.58	1.57	-0.01				
1,330	1,080	INTEL. TOBACCO	9.2	0.00	37	42700	48997	1.14	1.14	-				
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS										INDEX: 130.13	%CHG: -1.91	343	259547	585335
GRAND TOTAL										INDEX: 161.11	%CHG: -1.16	622	489079	1076875
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR TUESDAY 03/06/1997														
740	410	JOR. TRADE INC.	12.8	0.00	38	59250	38450	50	48	-0.02				
840	560	UNION INV. SOF.	9	0.00	11	16949	73356	54	51	-0.03				
790	370	ARAB FIN. INVEST.	9	0.00	17	143800	29518	80	82	+0.02				
950	730	AL-SHARQ INV. 75%	9	0.00	17	70450	6022	70	68	-0.02				

Thrust SSC heats up the desert in final week of trial runs in Jordan

By Roufan Nahhas
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The man: Richard Noble, current holder of the world land speed record at 1019.25kph (633.468mph).

Objective: to break the sound barrier.

The means: Thrust SSC — the first car capable of travelling faster than sound.

The place: Al Jafir Desert — Jordan.

Speed enthusiasts will have the chance to witness this daring attempt during the team's last week of trials here in Jordan before they leave for the United States for their world record attempt.

After successfully nearing 833.3kph (500mph) Tuesday morning, Thrust SSC is now ready for its 916.66-958.33kph (550-575mph) ground speed runs to wrap their final week in Al Jafir.

Led by Richard Noble, the current world speed record holder of 1019.25kph (633.468mph), the team arrived at Al Jafir Air Base May 21 for their second trial run in Jordan.

The team started their current run June 1 and had a successful attempt of 441mph.

Their initial attempt in Oct. 1996 was put on halt back in November due to heavy rains that flooded the area.

The team had 16 days of preparation before the first run recorded 368kph (230mph) on Nov. 12.

Maximum subsequent speed achieved was 529 kph (331mph) when the car exhibited rear wheel shimmy (rapid steering oscillations).

Another attempt was aborted for the same reason later on.

By improving the suspension system the car was ready to run but the floods prevented the crucial run.

The Thrust SSC team will leave for England in preparation for the 6-week super-sonic race against the U.S. Spirit of America team starting September 2 in the Black Rock Desert of Nevada.



Britain's jet-powered Thrust car races across the deserts of Al Jafir in south Jordan. The Thrust team is gearing up for its twin assault on the world land speed record and sound barrier in the United States (Reuters photo)



British Royal Air Force pilot Andy Green (in shorts), driver of Britain's jet-powered Thrust car, checks the vehicle with his crew after a run across Al Jafir desert (Reuters photo)

Now the car is ready with the modifications after the fitting of the SPAX dampers to control the steering over uneven surfaces, and changes to the parachute to increase high speed stability.

Driven by British fighter pilot Andy Green, Thrust SSC weighs 10.2 tonnes, has 110,000hp, twin Rolls-Royce Spey 202 jet engines, hydraulic suspension, active computer-controlled ride and rear wheel steering making it the most powerful car ever built.

The team was helped by the Jordanian Armed Forces in paving the track where

the attempt is taking place.

"We would like to express our gratitude to His Majesty King Hussein, HRH Prince Faisal, the Armed Forces, Royal Jordanian and all those who helped make this come true," project manager Richard Noble told the Jordan Times.

He explained that due to rising temperatures it became critical to run Thrust SSC in the early hours of the morning, because the high temperatures in the car's equipment bays makes the computer power supplies shut down as a fail-safe mechanism. Noble said the Jordanian

Air Force have generously made available a military medical evacuation Super Puma Helicopter for a nominal daily sum.

The helicopter is flown in from Amman on Thrust SSC run days and positions itself at the King Faisal Airbase in Al Jafir on stand-by alert.

Pushing themselves to the limit, the team is in good morale with high hopes of achieving higher speeds.

"We rise at 3:30 a.m., work hard, under the enormous heat of the desert, but the team is totally committed to success," Noble added.

Amman hosts Asian Handball Championship starting today

By Roufan Nahhas
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The 6th Asian Women's Handball Championship kicks off today at Al Hussein Youth City's Sports Palace with five top teams participating.

The competitors include titleholders Korea in addition to Japan, China, Uzbekistan and Chinese Taipei. Kazakhstan declined participation for financial reasons.

Only the top three teams will qualify to the World Championship due to be held in August in Germany.

The opening ceremony will be held at 5 p.m. under the patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Sumayya Bint Al Hassan and will be followed by two matches grouping South Korea against Taipei and China against Japan.

While the Kingdom is hosting the event, the Jordanian team will not take part in the competition. However, the national team will gain valuable experience watching the teams in action and may have the chance to play some friendly matches against some of the visiting teams.

The championship is sponsored by the Asian Handball Federation.

Jordan Television will transmit a live coverage of the matches and there will also be free admittance to the matches as a step to encourage more people to watch the game.

Schedule of matches
(At 4.30 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.)

Thursday 5/6	Uzbekistan + Japan
	Korea + China
Friday 6/6	Taipei + China
	Uzbekistan + South Korea
Sunday 7/6	Japan + South Korea
	Taipei + Uzbekistan
Monday 8/6	China + Uzbekistan
	Japan + Taipei

Mariners beat Blue Jays, A's lose again

SEATTLE (R) — Randy Johnson set down the first 16 batters in order on his way to a brilliant two-hitter and Ken Griffey Jr. hit his Major League-leading 25th homer on Monday as the Seattle Mariners blanked the Toronto Blue Jays 3-0.

Johnson (8-1) was perfect through the first 5 1/3 innings before Alex Gonzalez punched a single to centre.

The lanky lefty, nicknamed the big unit, finished with nine strikeouts and three walks and nearly celebrated his second career no-hitter on the anniversary of his first no-hit gem.

Batterymate Wilson said Johnson, who no-hit the Tigers on June 2, 1990, had everything going for him.

"He threw hard, he was able to locate on both sides of the plate," Wilson said. "Once again he had a great slider tonight. Mentally, physically he was in tune tonight."

Griffey gave Johnson all the support he needed in the first inning when he sent the first pitch from Luis Andujar (0-1) over the centre-field wall.

"He (Johnson) didn't make many mistakes, he was as good as he could possibly be and just about pitched himself a no-hitter," Toronto Manager Cito Gaston said. "When you beat him, you're going to have shut them down and junior's homer solved that."

Griffey became the second-fastest to reach 25 homers in a season, reaching the mark in 56 games to



New York Yankees pitcher David Wells throws against the Boston Red Sox in second inning action at Boston's Fenway Park. Wells gave up two runs in seven innings to lead his team to a 4-2 victory (Reuters photo)

trail only Babe Ruth, who hit 25 in 55 games in 1928.

In Milwaukee, rookie Mike Cameron's two-out, two-strike double in the top of the ninth inning snapped a 5-5 tie and helped the Chicago White Sox avoid a four-game sweep with an 8-5 win over the Milwaukee Brewers.

Chicago scored three in the eighth inning to tie the game and three in the ninth to clinch it off Brewers closer Doug Jones (3-2).

Belle went 0-for-3 with two walks, snapping his 27-game hitting streak, the longest in the majors this season. The streak tied him with Luke Appling (in 1936) for the longest in White Sox history.

Bill Simas (3-0) got one batter out in the eighth for the win, while Roberto Hernandez picked up his 11th save.

At Texas, Ivan Rodriguez and Warren Newson each homered and drove in two runs to back the pitching of

Darren Oliver as the Texas Rangers pounded out 18 hits in an 8-0 romp over the Minnesota Twins.

Oliver (4-6) stifled the twins on five hits and one walk through eight innings to win for just the second time in six starts.

Loser Brad Radke (4-5) was tagged for four runs and 13 hits over six innings.

In Boston, David Wells held the Red Sox down for seven innings and Paul O'Neill had three hits, including a run-scoring double that snapped a seventh-inning tie to lift the New York Yankees to a 4-2 victory over the Boston Red Sox.

In Oakland, Boh Hamelin homered and knocked in three runs and Deivi Cruz hit his first major-league homer as the Detroit Tigers held on for an 8-7 win over the Oakland Athletics.

Brian Moehler (4-4) was the winner and Steve Karsay (1-6) the loser.

The Athletics rallied for two runs in the bottom of the ninth before Doug Brocail got the final out for the save.

Mark McGwire hit his 21st homer of the season and 350th of his career in the second inning for Oakland.

In Baltimore, rain forced postponement of the Orioles' game against the Cleveland Indians.

American League

NY Yankees	5	Boston	2
White Sox	8	Milwaukee	5
Texas	8	Minnesota	0
Detroit	8	Oakland	7
Seattle	3	Toronto	0
Cleveland	at Baltimore	Postponed-Rain	

National League

Florida	4	San Francisco	2
San Diego	5	Atlanta	4
Montreal	10	NY Mets	0
Chi Cubs	3	Pittsburgh	2
Houston	2	Los Angeles	0
Colorado	11	St Louis	7
Cincinnati	at Philadelphia	Postponed-Rain	

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French Open

Graf beaten by Coetzer; battling Seles goes through

Kuerten upsets Kafelnikov as Dewulf wins

PARIS (Agencies) — Defending champion Steffi Graf crashed out of the French Open, beaten in straight sets by Amanda Coetzer in the quarterfinals Tuesday.

Coetzer beat Graf for the third time this year. Graf, a five-time champion at Roland Garros, failed to make the semifinals for the first time since 1986.

Triple-champion Monica Seles beat twelfth-seeded fellow-American Mary Joe Fernandez to reach the women's semi-finals when she scored a 3-6, 6-2, 7-5 victory in 2hrs 08mins.

The 1990, 1991 and 1992 champion and third-seed, now takes on either Swiss world number-one Martina Hingis or last year's runner-up Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario of Spain.

Hard-hitting Gustavo Kuerten became the first Brazilian player to reach a Grand Slam semi-final in the Open era here on Tuesday when he defeated champion Yevgeny Kafelnikov 6-2, 5-7, 2-6, 6-0, 6-4 in 2hrs 30mins in a quarter-final clash at the French Open.

Kuerten, 20, now plays Belgian qualifier Filip Dewulf for a place in Sunday's final.

Dewulf earlier beat Magnus Norman of Sweden 6-2, 6-7 (2/7), 6-4, 6-3.

Undone by a slew of unforced errors, Graf lost 6-1, 6-4 to the 11th-seeded South African, who has become Graf's nemesis.

"I don't seem to have any confidence," Graf said. "It was a terrible match. I felt uncomfortable, I couldn't find my shots." Coetzer beat Graf at the Australian Open and then handed the No. 2 in the world the worst defeat of her career when she beat her 6-0, 6-1 at the German Open last month. Coetzer reached the first Grand Slam semifinal of her career.

"It was very tough in the last few games. She was

starting to play better the last few points, I felt lucky to win the last point," Coetzer said.

Of the 78 points Coetzer won in the one hour, 32-minute match, 64 came on unforced errors by Graf, who won the tournament the last two years.

"I was very nervous. I started off making a lot of mistakes. I was unsure of my shots," said Graf, winner of 21 Grand Slam titles. The match was interrupted for 45 minutes by rain with Coetzer up 3-1 in the second set. But the delay did not help Graf's game.

"Even during the break I didn't find a positive attitude," she said.

"The state I am in at the moment, I don't seem to have any self-confidence. I don't find the patience and belief in my shots," Graf said.

In a match between Dewulf and Norman, two unseeded players, the turning point came late in the third set. Norman wasted four break points and received a warning for smashing his racket to the ground.

Norman dropped his serve in the next game to

fall behind 5-4 and he never recovered. Dewulf served out the set and cruised through the last one, clinching the match on a forehand winner.

Dewulf, No. 124 in the world, set a personal and Belgian Grand Slam best by reaching the semifinals.

"I started thinking that I could make the semifinals at Roland Garros and I felt that perhaps it wasn't my place. I got a little bit afraid and perhaps that's why I lost the second set," Dewulf said.

Only two qualifiers previously have reached the semifinals of Grand Slam tournament in the Open era, both in 1977, Bob Giltinan at the Australian Open and John McEnroe at Wimbledon.

At least two unseeded players will be in the semifinals.

Iva Majoli reached the first Grand Slam semifinal of her career when she beat doubles partner Ruxandra Dragomir 6-3, 5-7, 6-2 in the women's quarterfinals.

The seventh-seeded Croatian collapsed to the ground with relief after the two-hour, 23-minute battle and

while she lay on her back, Dragomir slowly somersaulted over the net and lay next to her. Then they got up and walked away with their arms around each other. Dragomir was the only unseeded player in the women's quarterfinals.

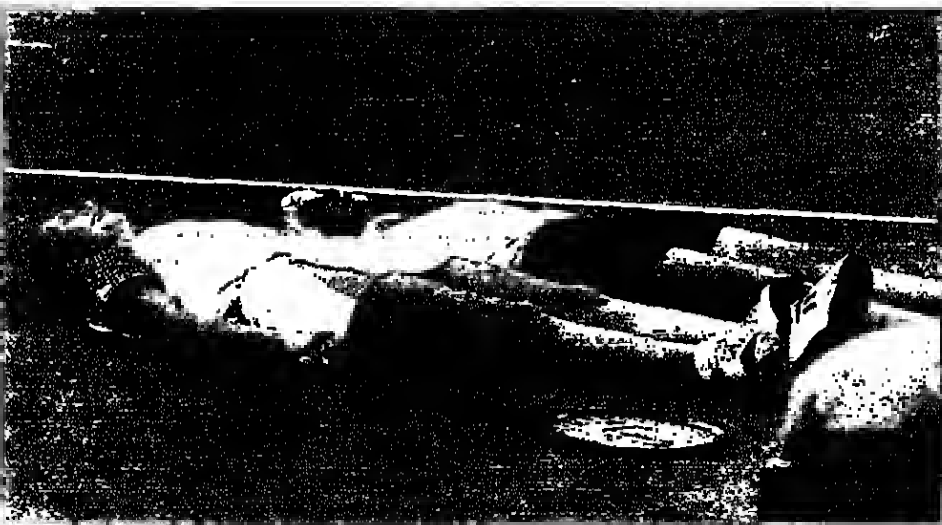
"I was really exhausted, she was chasing every ball," Majoli said.

Serving for the match at 5-3 in the second set, Majoli squandered one match point and dropped her serve.

Dragomir saved two more match points in the next and won four straight games to force a third set.

Majoli went up 5-2 and Dragomir received treatment for a groin injury during the changeover. Although Dragomir was visibly hampered by the injury, Majoli needed three more match points before putting it away with a volley.

On the men's side, no player has been able to establish his mark on clay so far this year and the trend has held true, with six unseeded players reaching the quarterfinals, a Grand Slam record.



Iva Majoli of Croatia (L) and Ruxandra Dragomir of Romania lie on the court after their quarter-final of the French Open at Roland Garros stadium, June 3. After Majoli defeated Dragomir 6-3, 5-7, 6-2, they congratulated each other and lie on the court to show that they were exhausted (Reuters photo)



Steffi Graf of Germany wipes her face during her match against Amanda Coetzer of South Africa (Reuters photo)



Filip Dewulf of Belgium raises his arms in victory after winning his match at the French Open against Magnus Norman of Sweden 6-2 6-7 6-4 6-3 (Reuters photo)

What they're saying at the Roland Garros

• "If he plays like he did against me he will kill Bruguera. He will kill anybody playing like that..." — seventh-seed Marcelo Rios of Chile after crashing out by Morocco's Hicham Arazi.

• "I consider myself 100 per cent Moroccan. It's a beautiful country, I'm proud of being Moroccan..." — surprise men's singles quarter-finalist Hicham Arazi who was born in Casablanca and grew up in France.

• "Unfortunately time is running quickly. I feel I'm one of the oldest players on the Tour." — the 29-year-old Czech player Petr Korda.

• "Maybe he needs glasses or something..." — Spain's twice-champion Sergi Bruguera, irritated by the constant querying of line-calls by Michael Chang.

• "I couldn't sleep good. I dream like five times I lose the match..." — Brazilian Gustavo Kuerten whose unfinished fourth-round match against Andrei Medvedev had to be resumed at 2-2 in the final set the next morning.

• "To me it's OK. When a player wears such bright clothes I always know where he is on court..." — Michael Chang, commenting on the controversial 'yellow-and-blue' football-style strip being worn by Brazilian Gustavo Kuerten.

• Monica too quick on the draw! Interpreters working on post-match interviews at Roland Garros have drawn up their own 'world rankings' for the verbal capabilities of star players. Bilingual Diane Medicin, who has been translating since the days of John McEnroe... says Chile's Marcelo Rios and women's triple champion Monica Seles of the United States give her the most problems. Of Rios she says: "He doesn't articulate his words. And he speaks very quietly in English and Spanish alike. Fortunately he doesn't speak for very long!" And of Seles, Medicin says: Monica Seles speaks at machine-gun speed. It's a job to keep up with her!" World No. 1s Martina Hingis and Pete Sampras are not easy either. Happy Hingis "laughs a lot when she speaks" and "doesn't yet speak English that well," while Sampras "uses a lot of New York slang." Defending champions Steffi Graf and Yevgeny Kafelnikov get highest marks for their delivery. "Steffi's English is very clear. And Kafelnikov is a sheer delight."

• Rocker Dewulf: Shock men's singles quarter-finalist Filip Dewulf likes to get away from it all when he is not on court pursuing his dream of becoming the first Belgian to reach a Grand Slam final. A keen rock fan, he will go to almost any lengths to get to a concert — even slap bang in the middle of a tournament. "Once during a tournament in Belgium, I only had the doubles left to play and I discovered a big festival of 'alternative' rock was taking place just a few hours away by car with my favourite band, the smashing pumpkins, headlining the event."

• 'Black sheep' Blanco: "It's the worst thing that has ever happened to me." Galo Blanco was the last member of the "Spanish armada" supposed to get to the men's singles quarter-finals at the French Open. But the 20-year-old discovery, coached by Uruguayan Enrique Perez, deserves a little success as he hasn't had an easy ride trying to establish himself ahead of the likes of Alex Corretja, Carlos Moya and Albert Costa. Blanco beat Moya in the 1994 Spanish Juniors final but it was Moya who made the big breakthrough — signing a contract with Nike. Respected coach Javier Duarte then took Blanco into a group which included 1994 French Open finalist Alberto Berasategui. But when current Spanish number-one Alex Corretja joined the band, Blanco was again left on the outside looking in. He surfaced again by winning in Prague, beating new Brazilian sensation Gustavo Kuerten, and he now plays Australia's Patrick Rafter for a place in the semifinals.

• 'Polite' Jensens: Eccentric American tennis brothers Luke and Murphy Jensen may send shivers down the spines of traditionalists with their wacky ideas, such as bringing hard rock music to punctuate their tournaments. But they can't be faulted when it comes to old-fashioned good manners on court. They remain the favourites of the ball boys and ball girls here — never forgetting to thank them with a "please" and "thank you" everytime they are tossed a ball.

Hill says oversteer maybe killed Senna

IMOLA (R) — Formula One world champion Damon Hill told a court on Monday that oversteer might have caused the crash that killed Brazilian Ayrton Senna at the San Marino Grand Prix in 1994.

The Briton, who was number two driver to Senna in the Williams racing team at the time of the accident, dismissed prosecution charges that the accident was caused when the three-times world champion's steering column snapped.

Commenting on video footage taken from a camera on Senna's car seconds before the accident at Imola's Tamborello bend, Hill told the court: "My own feeling is that the car looks to be oversteering."

As the court watched the same film on a hi-tech computer screen, Hill explained: "There are two distinct times where the car looks to be oversteering and that the steering wheel is exactly the way that I would expect to see to correct oversteer."

Hill was testifying as a prosecution witness at the manslaughter trial of former team chief Frank Williams and five other defendants at Imola, near the track where Senna's car crashed into a wall at 200 kph on May 1, 1994.

Asked whether the apparent oversteer in the Brazilian's car was due to low tyre pressure or the state of the Imola track, Hill replied: "You cannot separate the two."

"My idea looking at it is that the car seems to oversteer when it crosses the face on the circuit where

there are some marks."

Hill's comments appeared to support the Williams defence lawyer Oreste Dominioni's claims in March that Senna's death may have been due to "anomalies in the asphalt" of the track.

Imola's circuit manager Giorgio Poggi, race director Roland Bruynseraede and track director Federico Bendinelli are also on trial, charged with allowing the 1994 San Marino Grand Prix to take place on a dangerous track.

Hill said he reached his

conclusion about oversteer after replaying the footage with engineers at Williams's

Didcot headquarters in England less than a week after the tragedy.

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Consulting Services required Project title: Demand Side Management

Within the framework of supranational technical cooperation the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) is implementing a research and development project on Demand Side Management (DSM). The overall objective of this project is the development and implementation of a demand-side management concept that can be used as a blue print for future DSM projects within the framework of bilateral technical cooperation.

In this context consulting services are required to achieve the following objectives:

- To analyse the institutional and regulatory framework of the energy sector in Jordan: organisation, procedures, the energy law and main actors in energy planning in Jordan.
- To analyse the structure and development of the electricity supply sector.
- To analyse the structure and development of electricity end-use.
- To identify technical and economic potentials for energy efficiency improvements in electricity end-use and for load management.
- To evaluate past experience in Jordan with respect to DSM, energy conservation and energy efficiency.
- To outline conclusions which critical issues the electricity sector should focus upon in order to render DSM activities more effective.
- To recommend definite measures to be implemented within the small industrial and commercial consumer groups to affect DSM objectives.

Further detailed Terms of Reference of the consulting services required are available at GTZ-Office Amman, Issam Ajlouni Str. 8, Shmeisani, P.O. Box 926238, Amman 11110, Tel.: 667021. Deadline for submission of offers: June 12, 1997, 14:00 p.m.

Jury finds Gulf war veteran guilty of U.S. terror bombing

DENVER (AFP) — Timothy McVeigh, a decorated Gulf war veteran turned anti-government militant, could face the death penalty after a jury found him guilty of the deadliest terrorist act carried out on U.S. soil.

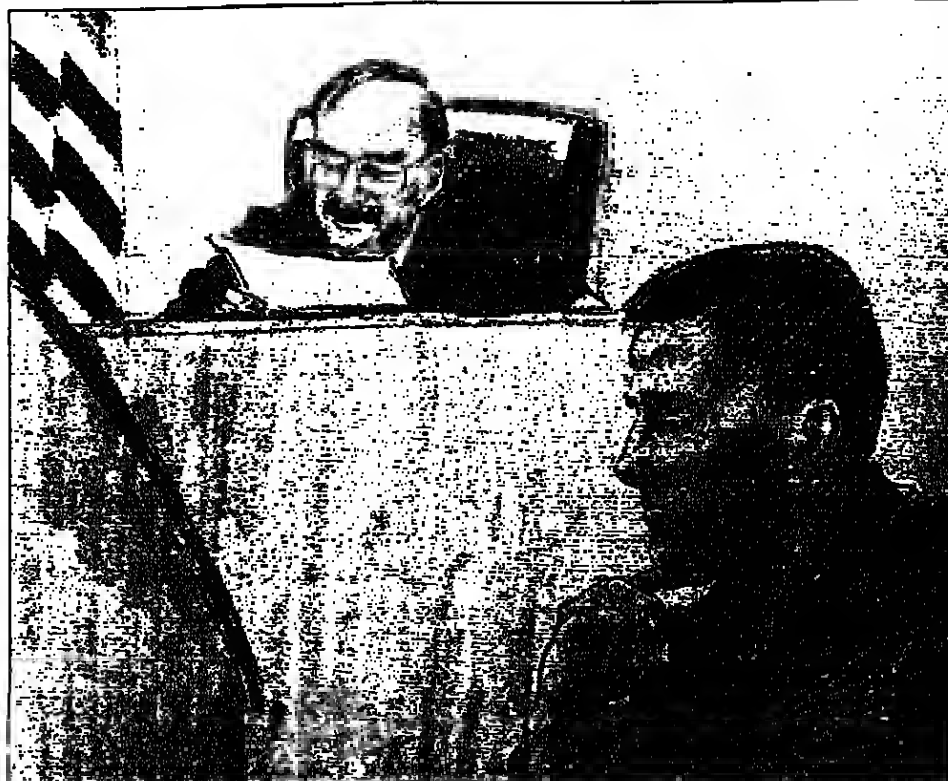
The 29-year-old former army sergeant with boyish good looks and a deep hatred of the U.S. government could face the death penalty following his conviction Monday on all 11 counts in connection with the Oklahoma City bombing two years ago, in which 168 died — including eight federal agents — and more than 600 were injured.

The seven men and five women jurors will decide on a sentence after hearing further testimony in federal court when the penalty phase of the trial opens on Wednesday.

McVeigh pleaded not guilty to detonating a two-tonne fertilizer bomb outside the nine-story Alfred P. Murrah federal building in downtown Oklahoma City on April 19, 1995.

He entered the courtroom smiling and chatting to his attorneys but remained impassive when the verdict was read out.

Relatives of the victims responded with tears of joy, hugging and clutching each other outside the courtroom where U.S. district court



Artist drawing of an impassive Timothy McVeigh, the decorated Gulf war veteran convicted Tuesday by a grand jury on 11 counts related to the Oklahoma City bombing resulting in the deaths of 168 people including 19 children and 8 federal agents (Photo by AFP)

Judge Richard Matsch had banned celebrations.

McVeigh's family issued a brief statement saying that despite the guilty verdict, "we still love him and intend to stand by him no matter what happens."

Cheers and applause greeted lead Prosecutor Joseph Hartzler as he left the court-

house where McVeigh was convicted of conspiracy, using a weapon of mass destruction, destruction of federal property, and first degree murder of eight federal law enforcement officials.

Mr. Hartzler praised the families of victims "for their patience and dignity

throughout this long ordeal."

"We're obviously very pleased with the result," he said. "We're ready to move on to the next stage."

U.S. President Bill Clinton said in a statement that the courage of the fam-

(Continued on page 7)

Barak sweeps Labour Party elections

Barak will continue in the way of Rabin — Leah

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel's ex-army chief Ehud Barak swept in as new leader of the opposition Labour Party after elections on Tuesday, according to public television projections.

Mr. Barak, a leader of Labour's right wing, obtained 57 per cent of the vote in the ballot to find a successor to Shimon Peres and lead the party into the next national elections due in 2000, the television said.

Almost 100,000 of the party's 167,000 members cast their ballots in an election marking the handover of power from the founding fathers of the party and the Jewish state to a new generation of leaders.

Mr. Peres, 73, announced that he would not run for reelection as Labour chairman after being defeated a year ago by right-wing nationalist leader Benjamin Netanyahu in Israel's first direct election of a prime minister.

Like Mr. Netanyahu a hard-liner on security issues, Mr. Barak, 55, claims to be the only

Labour politician capable of beating the right at the ballot box.

Recent surveys indicate that if elections were held today, the Labour politician would triumph.

His main rival, Yossi Beilin, 49, an outspoken dove who was Mr. Peres' right-hand man in negotiating the Oslo peace accords with the Palestinians, obtained 29 per cent of the party vote according to the television estimates.

Shlomo Ben-Ami, 53, an eloquent history professor campaigning to represent Israel's Sephardic community of north African and Asian Jews, garnered 11 per cent while 53-year-old former health minister Ephraim Sneh gained four per cent, the television said.

Under Labour Party rules, Mr. Barak needed at least 40 per cent of the party votes to win. Official results were expected on Wednesday morning.

During his brief political career — he only joined the Labour Party two years ago



Ehud Barak, the new leader of the Labour Party casts his vote during party elections, Tuesday (Photo by AFP)

(Continued on page 7)

France's Jospin and Juppe hold brief handover of premiership

PARIS (R) — Socialist French Prime Minister Lionel Jospin formally took office Tuesday, meeting his Conservative Gaullist predecessor, Alain Juppe, for a 13-minute handover.

The two men exchanged a cordial handshake and posed smiling for photographers in the courtyard of the prime minister's Matignon office on Paris' Left Bank.

After only a short private meeting, Mr. Jospin accompanied Mr. Juppe down a red carpet to his waiting car, applauded by the staff of the prime minister's office.

Mr. Juppe had been in office just over two years following President Jacques Chirac's election in May 1995.

The new premier and his chief-of-staff, Olivier Schrameck, returned to work without answering questions from reporters.

Socialist Party spokesman Francois Hollande said Mr. Jospin would form a smaller cabinet with more women. He hoped it would include representatives of all the left-wing parties

which won Sunday's parliamentary election, including the Communists.

Before the handover, Mr. Jospin had an hour-long meeting with Communist leader Robert Hue to discuss the formation of the government.

The Communists said Monday they wanted to participate but sought undertakings that the Socialists would raise the national minimum wage by eight per cent, cut value added tax, take first steps to cut the working week to 35 hours from 39 and ensure there would be no further austerity to qualify for a single European currency.

An aide to Mr. Jospin said he had told Mr. Hue he wanted "a yes or no answer without conditions" on whether the Communists would join the government.

If they accepted, the Communists could have two cabinet ministers and a secretary of state, he said.

The Communist Party's national council was due to meet later Tuesday to take a decision.

Socialists to stick to Euro timetable

PARIS (R) — French Socialist Elisabeth Guigou, tipped to serve as European affairs minister in Lionel Jospin's new government, said Tuesday that it would stick to the timetable for Europe's planned single currency.

Asked whether the new government would seek to ensure the Euro currency is created at the planned deadline of Jan. 1, 1999, Ms. Guigou told RTL Radio: "Of course we must respect this deadline."

She added that the Maastricht Treaty on criteria for economic and monetary union must be filled out with a separate chapter on employment.

"The treaty must be completed on certain points. Institutions must be reformed to enable Europe to decide and to be more

democratic in the name of the European left, I suggested at the intergovernmental conference (IGC) on institutional reform) that there be a chapter on jobs," she said.

Mr. Jospin formally takes over power from defeated Prime Minister Alain Juppe at 11 a.m. (0900 GMT) Tuesday and will appoint his cabinet in the next 48 hours, aides said.

Mr. Jospin was appointed Monday by President Jacques Chirac who unwittingly precipitated the move when he called a snap parliamentary election aimed at consolidating his own hold on power five weeks ago.

The Communist Party, which Mr. Jospin needs for an outright majority, has pressed for relaxation of national budget criteria set for joining the Euro.

Egypt to make first foray into space through Mars mission

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt is developing a space drill, named after an ancient God, which will be used on the Russian exploration craft Marskhod to find out if there is life on Mars.

"I think we will call the drill Kheper (the Pharaonic name for Scarab), God of ancient Egypt, a symbol of eternity and good luck," said Mossaleem Shaltut, of the National Research Institute of Astronomy and Geophysics in Cairo.

The Egyptian Ministry of Scientific Research signed an agreement with the California-based planetary society in September and with the Russian Institute of Space Research, Mr. Shaltut said.

Under the agreement Egypt will design and make a space drill estimated to cost \$3 million and to be used on a flight scheduled for 2001, he added.

"A five-kilogramme (11-pound) prototype will be tested in Al Oweinat, in the western desert, on the border with Sudan and Libya," Mr. Shaltut said.

"The nature of the ground there is like the one on

Mars. Like Mars there are also sand storms and arid valleys there," he added.

Mr. Shaltut said information obtained to date from Mars probes indicate that there is water under a layer of ice which in turn is covered by sand, small rocks and limestone.

"The space probe can drill three to four metres down to remove a sample of water. The American space probes Viking One and Viking Two which were used in 1975

were only able to dig 10 centimetres deep and could not reach water level," Mr. Shaltut said.

Mr. Shaltut said this would be the first time water samples have been taken to determine if there is life on Mars.

"The drill will be put in the Marskhod, a Russian spacecraft and the equipment will take off from Cape Canaveral in 2001," Mr. Shaltut said.

He said he hoped the success of this project will pave the way for the creation of an Egyptian space agency to help build telecommunications satellites instead of buying them

from abroad.

"Egypt has had since 1963 an astronomical observatory, one of the world's largest reflector-telescopes which has a 74-inch diameter and helped in 1930 in the discovery of Pluto," he said.

A space agency would help bring back home 80 per cent of Egyptian satellite experts who are currently working in Europe or the United States and bolster national security in the face of Israeli satellites, he added.

The planetary society, with which Egypt signed the agreement to develop the drill, is a non-government space organisation which claims 100,000 members across the world. It works closely with Russian, French and U.S. space agencies to test explorations on Mars.

The society has conducted tests on the Russian space robot and has co-sponsored with the United Nations and the European space agency workshops in several developing nations such as Egypt, Pakistan and Mexico.

China defends its sales of conventional arms to Iran

BEIJING (R) — China Tuesday defended what it called transfers of small amounts of conventional weapons to Iran, describing them as appropriate and legal.

"Our... engagement with other countries, including Iran, in small amounts of conventional weapons is totally appropriate and legal," Foreign Ministry spokesman Cui Tianshui told a news briefing.

"Regarding the transfer of conventional weapons, including missiles, China has adopted a long-standing attitude of prudence and responsibility," Mr. Cui said when asked about reports of

Chinese sales of anti-ship missiles to Iran.

Mr. Cui said any sale should not harm the peace, security and stability of a region. It should also strengthen the defence of the country involved but not exceed its needs.

China in general notified the United Nations of exports of conventional weapons, Mr. Cui said. He gave no further details.

The United States imposed a trade and investment ban on Iran in June 1995, accusing it of sponsoring terrorism, a charge that Tehran denies.

Iran opposes the U.S. military presence in the Gulf

and says Washington falsely accuses Tehran of expansionism in the region to scare its Gulf Arab allies into buying more U.S. weaponry.

Last November, the Washington Times quoted the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency as saying China recently sold Iran missile technology, advanced radar components and nearly 400 tonnes of chemicals used to produce nerve agents.

The Washington Post's news service reported this week that the U.S. State Department had officially

(Continued on page 7)

Algiers shuts schools, tightens security two days before ballot

ALGIERS (R) — Algerian authorities Tuesday ordered some schools closed and told residents to report suspicious packages and cars to try to staunch bloodshed from Islamist rebel bombs ahead of a general election Thursday.

In a statement published by local newspapers, the Interior Ministry urged citizens to show "extreme caution" and report suspect cars or packages to the security forces.

Bombs blamed on Muslim guerrillas have killed at least 22 people and wounded more than 120 in the past three days in Algiers, home to between three and four million people.

Al Khabar newspaper said some of those wounded by a

bomb in a crowded market in Bab El-Oued district in Algiers Monday had since died, raising the death toll to 11. Security forces said shortly after the blast that seven people were killed.

The authorities ordered Algerian schools to suspend classes for young students as of midday Tuesday until Saturday. Le Matin newspaper attributed the order to "extreme tension" in the capital.

Earlier, the Interior Ministry said all weekly markets were to close from Monday night to Friday. It also banned all large trucks from the roads during the same period and smaller trucks and petrol tankers between Wednesday and Friday.

Islamist rebels have in the past used explosive-laden trucks and pickups to attack government and civilian targets.

Thousands of troops were expected to deploy in Algiers as part of a huge operation to protect polling stations ahead of voting.

Liberte daily said security forces killed 11 guerrillas in several clashes in the capital Monday.

The latest bombings, which followed massacres of scores of villagers close to Algiers, are seen as an attempt to dissuade the nearly 17 million voters from taking part in the elections.

The government has pre-

(Continued on page 7)

UNICEF fears U.N. reforms will hurt its work for children

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Carol Bellamy, the director of the U.N. Children's Fund, has balked at reform proposals, warning UNICEF could lose its independent voice on behalf of children.

"It is not an overstatement to say that our progress in ensuring the development and well-being of children and women, and in building support for the convention on the rights of the child, will continue to depend on UNICEF's independent voice and identity," she said.

Addressing the opening of the UNICEF executive board Monday, Ms. Bellamy, a former New York City Council president, feared the agency would lose its identity if it were divided into clusters of aid agencies.

"It is self-evident that no other United Nations agency speaks directly for children, day in and day out, globally

and locally," she said. "If that voice is muted or even stifled, there is a real and present danger that children will become a lesser priority."

Secretary-General Kofi Annan is considering some far-reaching restructuring plans for the specialised U.N. agencies that he intends to present in July.

One proposal includes alternatives such as the creation of a new humanitarian affairs agency into which U.N. bodies handling emergencies — including some sections of UNICEF — would be consolidated.

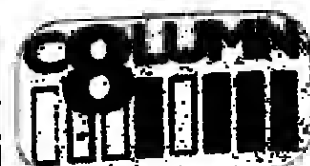
Under that scenario, Ms. Bellamy said, the office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Geneva would effectively become the U.N. humanitarian or emergency relief organisation, with wider powers than it currently possessed.

The Department of Humanitarian Affairs, which

is based in New York, would either be abolished or also become a part of UNHCR, a reorganisation Europeans have greeted with scepticism since they created that department.

The proposals would fold other parts of UNICEF into a cluster of development agencies in New York that would be comprised of the U.N. Development Programme and the U.N. Population Fund. The object, diplomats said, is to share administration and overheads, especially in the field.

Ms. Bellamy said UNICEF, which has a strong following in the United States, must have continued access to the senior political leadership of countries in which it operates. "UNICEF's voice must remain strong and identifiable in the social and economic dialogues and in the planning process," she said.



Diana's dresses unveiled before charity auction

LONDON (R) — Seventy-nine sumptuous dresses worn by Princess Diana during her ill-fated marriage went on view ahead of an auction expected to raise millions of dollars for AIDS and cancer charities. The collection of elegant silk, satin, velvet and crepe evening gowns and fetching cocktail dresses from Britain's top designers was displayed for the media ahead of a private viewing for the princess in the evening and a public showing starting on Tuesday. If sales of the 200-page colour catalogue, which netted a total of \$1,069,558 by Monday, are anything to go by, the auction at Christie's in New York June 25 should be a huge success. Each of the dresses, created between 1981 and 1996 and worn by the princess through her 15-year marriage to Prince Charles, will be sold to the highest bidder. The proceeds going to the AIDS crisis trust and the Royal Marsden Hospital cancer fund.

Moroccan illegal immigrants dumped on home beach

RABAT (R) — Seventeen Moroccans trying to get illegally to Spain splashed ashore after being dropped 100 yards off what they were told was the Spanish coast, the Moroccan daily newspaper L'Opinion said. But the immigrants, peasants from the town of Larache, instead found themselves landing in the nearby north Moroccan city of Tangier, the daily said, quoting a police source. The men, aged up to 30, had paid a middleman, who sailed off into the night, 7,000 dirhams (\$740) each to cross the strait of Gibraltar. Police arrested the would-be illegal immigrants.

Animal lovers bid to stop Dutch queen wearing furs

THE HAGUE (AFP) — Animal lovers in the Netherlands have launched a campaign aimed at persuading Dutch Queen Beatrix to stop wearing furs. The association Boont Voor Dieren has sent 160,000 postcards to universities and schools, asking them to be forwarded to the queen. The cards bear the cartoon of a royal personage wearing a dead fox stole and preceded by her husband with a rifle. Boont Voor Dieren said the queen was one of the few people in the country still to wear furs, and derided the official palace response that they did not come from protected species. It was not better to wear furs from unprotected animals that had been trapped or raised in cruel conditions before being electrocuted, the association said.

Bob Dylan home from hospital after treatment for lung infection

NEW YORK (AFP) — U.S. singer Bob Dylan was back home Tuesday after being hospitalised one week for a potentially fatal lung disease, a spokesman for Columbia Records said. Doctors are "confident that he will make a full recovery" in four to six weeks, the spokesman said, adding that Dylan was discharged over the weekend from an undisclosed hospital — apparently not in New York. "I'm just glad to be feeling better," Dylan said in a statement released Monday. "I really thought I'd be seeing Elvis (Presley) soon." Dylan cancelled a tour of Britain and Switzerland and was hospitalised with chest pains on May 25 — one day after his 56th birthday. He was reportedly treated for histoplasmosis, a fungal infection of the lungs which, in turn, had been triggered by a pericarditis, an inflammation of the sac surrounding the heart.